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THE ARTIST,

The Merchant,

AND

THE STATESMAN,

OF THE

AGE OF THE MEDICI, AND OF OUR OWN TIMES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY C. EDWARDS LESTER,

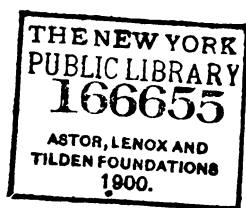
U. S. CONSUL AT GENOA—AUTHOR OF THE GLORY AND SHAME OF ENGLAND—THE CONDITION AND FATE OF ENGLAND—TRANSLATOR OF MACHIAVELLI, ALFIERI, ETC.—HONORARY MEMBER OF THE ATENEO ITALIANO AT FLORENCE, ETC.

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LETTER I.

To one whose historical associations belong to the Middle Ages, Florence becomes all that Rome is to the classic tourist, or Loretto to the devout Pilgrim.—*Lady Morgan's Italy.*

Florence, February —, 1845.

DEAR —,

I AM in Florence at last—It was a cold, dark, winter day; one of those dreadful days you will roam the world over and find nowhere but in Italy; too warm to freeze, and too cold not to; and all day making up its mind what to do—anything but coquetry between Italian sunbeams, and our old Jack Frost of the North.

We left Leghorn early, and drove hard—but night fell on us before our ride was done. “Only ten miles more, Signore,” was all the comfort we got from the veturino, as we set out from the last stopping-place. Our road lay along the bank of the Arno, which was chafing by, at high flood; turbid, foaming. The rain poured down, and the dim lamps of the carriage only showed us how dark it was, and the sharp tinkling of the little bells on the necks of the jaded horses, only made the road the

more dreary—"This, then," thinks I to myself, "is the sunny vale of the Arno!" Yes—but I was cold and tired, and could not feel very romantic, and so didn't try.

By my troth!—I like to hear the rumbling of the massive gates of an old city in the night; it makes one think of the walled towers of the Middle Ages, when iron gates did not swing open without a reason. Nor would they have swung open now, but for the name of a man who could chop off heads for amusement when the fancy struck him, written on a small card in a peculiar style. The little card was inspected under the lamp, and it saved us a doubtful lodging outside the walls. "*Va bene*," cried out the sentinel, whose beard would have done no dishonor to a Muscovite, nor his manners to a gentleman, "*Avanti*,"—Crack went the whip—and we were in Florence.

We heard the old gates slammed to, behind us, as we drove along, and the old palaces frowned down on us like so many Towers of London. It was the last night but one of the Carnival, nor would the gay Florentines let the storm keep them in their houses—at every corner the masked night-walkers were hurrying by in the rain.

The traveller is not long in deciding what room he will take when there is no choice. The Hotel was crowded, and the porter who had at last succeeded in rubbing enough of the sleepy sand out of his eyes to see the candle he carried, led the way

up winding stairs, and through long passages, story after story, while, at every turn, some old statue stared grim at me through the dark. At the end of a long narrow passage, the "guide" pushed open a door, which swung by fits and starts, crazily on its hinges, and setting down the candle on the mantel-piece, bid me a *felicissima notte, Signore, reposa bene*, as all Italian servants do, and left me to myself.

A mass of dry fagots were lying on the hearth—they flashed into a blaze the instant the candle touched them, and shot a half lightning gleam over the apartment. Everything around me bore the deep traces of time. Some score of doubtful-looking figures started out from the walls and ceilings in fresco. Four high-backed, long-armed chairs, stood leaning against the sides of the room; the window shutters were of iron, and when I shut them, they came creaking back again, as the rust fell from their hinges—even the bedstead was of iron, and rattled when I touched it. On the mantel-piece the crucifixion was rudely cut in cedar; over it was a mimic shrine, covered with glass, with its Madonna and Child half defaced, and votive offerings suspended—they were flowers long dead. I had slept in many a strange place, but I thought (as no one could laugh at me) I would look under the bed for once. I did—and you may judge of my astonishment when I saw nothing—but the dancing shadows of the drapery there—for I was in the cell of a monk, and this

dreary pile was once a convent ! I lay awake for an hour, and heard the rain beat in gusts against the old walls—now and then, the rapid roll of a carriage came rumbling up to my fifth story ; and when I slept, I dreamed of a convent of the Middle Ages, with its monks, and cells, and beads, and cowls, and I heard the lazy shuffle of the monks along the stone passages, and the solemn tocsins that gathered them to the Ave-Maria. Such was Florence the first night.

The next morning rose without a cloud. The sun shone bright and warm into the window, and the little canaries were singing merrily under it. I threw up the window and the soft air came in cool breaths, as it used to come into our windows in New England, some of those delicious spring mornings long ago, bringing with it the odor of the first green things. The Arno seemed to have caught the same spirit ; it chafed no longer, but swept gracefully by in its old channel as in the time of the Crusaders, who had a saying when far away in the Holy Land, that it was the last calm thing they saw.

The last day of the Carnival—it broke forth gaily—gay thousands crowded the streets and piazzas ; twelve hundred carriages appeared on the Corso, conveying their maskers. The celebrated Duchess de Berry, who had worn a mask at European Courts for half a century, was in the Grand Duke's state coach, *à la naturel* ; peasants, bandits, princes, priests, flower-girls, English turn-outs. But you

have read a hundred descriptions of just such **scenes**, and so I shall tell you nothing about it. I came to Florence to pass Lent, and I will atone for all my literary sins against the olden time. I will go to the graves of the great men who lived in the days of the Revival of Letters, and worship at the tombs of the Fathers of modern Civilisation;—the **ARTIST** who filled his age with enthusiasm for all that is bright and beautiful—the **MERCHANT PRINCE** who asked Michael Angelo to build his palace, and Raphael to paint its walls in fresco, and Donatello to make its statues—and the **STATESMAN** who loved, and protected, and encouraged them all, and made the home of the poor man glad, too, for which we love him better; for Liberty is nobler than Art, although we sometimes like to say Art is the most beautiful thing in the world.

The foreigners have all gone off to Rome, and I am glad of it. I shall not be obliged to hear their brown-stout criticisms in the galleries of the great masters, nor listen to their roast beef jokes in the solemn aisles of Santa Croce, where such men as Michael Angelo, and Machiavelli, and Galileo, and Alfieri sleep.

I have heard you say the Middle Ages were solemn and earnest ages. How true those words were: “I cannot think for thinking of them.” Yes, those solemn and earnest days, which come looming up through the dim waste of Centuries—their history is like the tapestried halls of Henry of Navarre, where we see giant forms moving dimly across the

plain—the knight fighting back death till he hears the clarion of his brethren sounded no longer—Liberty's own child and hero, too brave for the rack, too strong for the dungeon. Those ages which rolled on, their deep muttering waves in long swells from the feet of the barbarian's steed, as he trampled through the golden house of Nero, till they surged up round the German Printing-Press, and the new Age came on, for which Liberty and the Arts were waiting; Liberty, whose divine form, like the Son of God, was wet with the cold damps of night; Arts which, like the Children of Israel, were making a weary pilgrimage through the wilderness, on to the promised land. I will talk to you of the Middle Ages from my Monk's cell, as we used to talk about them long ago.

Your true—&c., &c.

LETTER II.



Florence, February —, 1845.

DEAR —,

When I see you again, I shall have a long story to tell you of the descendants of Americus Vesputius. I will give you a part of it now.

It had always been a matter of wonder to me, that of all the Americans who had visited Florence, and written about its great men, no one should have said anything about the Discoverer's descendants. Indeed, so entirely have we been cut off from all information on the subject, I must confess it was with the greatest astonishment I heard the other day, that there is one son and several daughters, lineal descendants of Vesputius, now living at Florence, in poverty, unnoticed and unknown.

I was making some inquiries at a *reunion* of literary men, a few evenings ago, about the Vesputi family, and a gentleman who knows them well promised to introduce me to them the following day. He was a connexion of the family of Carlo Botta, the author of the History of our War of Independence. There is a man, too, of whom I shall say something at another time.

The next day this gentleman called round at the appointed hour, and we walked to the house together. "Is it not strange," said he, as we left the hotel, "that the descendants of the man who discovered your Continent, and who lived in the palaces of Princes and Kings, should now be obliged to become servants to get their daily bread. The sisters (with the exception of Ellena, who is living in America) are dependent on their daily earnings for their daily bread, and the brother, a well educated, noble young fellow, is employed by the Grand Duke's government in the office of finances, on a salary of \$60 a year! They have all come together this morning, from the different scenes of their occupations, to meet the first American who has ever sought their acquaintance. What a strange meeting! A traveller from the distant continent Vespuccius discovered, coming, more than three centuries after his death, to his birth-place, to search out his descendants, who are living helpless, and dependent, on the very spot where their ancestor was a companion of princes, and lived on his own paternal estate!" We talked on, and we walked on, till we reached the house where the family had assembled. It was the house of a friend, perhaps of a connexion of the family.

Here we found them gathered. Two sisters and a brother, the young Cavaliere Amerigo Vespucci, with his youthful wife. Two sisters were absent—one beloved, who is teaching her own beautiful tongue in Paris, independent while her strength lasts—an-

other in America, where, by her dissolute life and bare-faced deceptions, she has blasted the prospects of her family, perhaps for ever! I have sometimes known the luxury of feeling the warm grasp of a hand shrivelled with hunger, as I entered the damp cellar of a worn out, cast-aside English operative, to leave a mite, and speak a word of consolation, but I have never been where my presence seemed to excite so much gratitude. I had the evening before expressed a hope, that in spite of the bold fraud practised upon our government by an unworthy descendant of the Discoverer, some act of recognition of her innocent sisters might yet be passed by Congress, and they all still find a home for themselves, and their children, in the New World. These words had been borne to them, and they were the first gleam of hope that had shot across their path for many years. Now when I entered they flocked around me and pressed my hand in silent gratitude, and I am not ashamed to say that we wept together. Before us hung a portrait of their ancestor, painted by Bronzino from life, which they had always preserved, and refused to part with at any price, even when they knew the pangs of extreme poverty. I felt strange emotions when I looked on that picture. The face of the bold navigator was turned away from earth to the stars above him, and I could not but think he saw a new world there, and I blessed God that he did not behold the dark vale of misfortune his own descendants

were to travel long after he was dead. We sat down and talked about Vespucius, and his fate and his fame. I give you the facts as they gave them to me, of their sister. This character has made herself quite notorious in both hemispheres, and it is high time the world should know her true history. The romance of mystery does very well for such a lady, until somebody unluckily strips off the false wrap-page, and reveals the truth.

Many years ago, Ellena Vespucci made her *début* in the gay circles of Florence. She was gifted with uncommon beauty of person, great vivacity of mind, and captivating manners. Less indebted to her literary advantages than to her native genius, and that tact peculiar to her sex, she determined that finesse and personal charms should win for her a fortune which would atone for the lack of a more auspicious birth. She was courted by the gay, and the noble, and some of the leaders of rank and of fashion were soon added to her conquests. Her intrigues and amours at last became so bold, she brought herself into contempt, and she thought she would court fortune in another land. She applied to the Grand Duke for papers, who, to get rid of her, gave her letters for the Court of Louis Philippe, and he was glad enough to do it at so cheap a rate. She had, in various ways, found means to support herself in luxury at Florence, but she was unmindful of her poor sisters, who lived on in their indigence and dependence. I have been assured by indivi-

duals here who knew the facts, that when Ellena saw she must leave Florence, she represented to her sisters a plan of her own, of making a voyage to America, for the purpose of pressing the claims of the Vespucci family with the governments of the New World. Under this pretext she obtained from the family no small portion of their little treasures. They gave up some relics of the Discoverer which they had clung to in all their fortunes.

She arrived in Paris, and was received at court, where she soon became the star *du beau monde*. The centre of admiring and courting throngs, who hung upon her steps, she forgot the mission she had undertaken. Among the dissolute courtesans of France she ran a brilliant career of pleasure and dissipation. She at last reached the acme of her ambition. One of the royal Princes acknowledged her charms, and bowed at her feet. Even in Paris, good taste fixes a limit to indulgence, and her career was suddenly brought to a close.

She sailed for South America, and made an application to one or more governments there, either for appropriations of lands, or money. Fortune frowned upon the fair suppliant south of the equator, and she sailed for the United States, to make her last bold dash—to win or lose all upon one throw.

The history of her diplomacies would make an amusing, and yet a humiliating picture, for herself and many persons connected with her intrigues. Relying upon her own personal charms, upon her name,

and the veneration felt for her great ancestor in the New World, and probably more than all, upon the rage among our people for all that is foreign, making them the dupes of adventurers more easily than any other nation, she began her crusade by playing off one of the boldest impositions ever attempted. With the French Minister for a *chaperon*, she at once took the stand we have successively assigned to the whole troop of foreign adventurers who have come to our country to make fools of us, and succeeded in all cases so much to their wishes.

She said she had been banished from her native land by a tyrant, for nobly attempting the restoration of its liberty, and she showed on her arms (which she generally wore bare for the purpose) the scars she had received in battle! That she was the last human being in whose veins flowed the blood of Americus Vespucius—that her estate had been confiscated by a tyrannical government, and she, the last of her race, had fled with a forlorn hope to the Capitol of the noble Republic, reared upon the soil discovered by Vespucius, where she hoped to find an asylum from all her sorrows, a home for her descendants, and a grave to rest in, at last!

All this would have been very well if it had not all been *a lie*. There happened at that moment to be a brother and three sisters of this diplomatist living in Florence, in poverty and dependence, waiting with anxiety for some favorable tidings, from an application they supposed was being made in the name of

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all the children of the Discoverer. So far from being banished from her country by a tyrant, for an heroic attempt to restore its fallen liberties, she had been sent off for her vulgarity and dissoluteness—and the less she ever says about the honorable scars won in the Service of Liberty, the better ; people have generally taken particular pains to cover up scars received in places like the one where she got hers ! So far from having had her estate confiscated by a despot, she never had any estate to confiscate : and she had for years eaten the bread of this despot, who is beloved by his own subjects, and by the generous and the good throughout Europe !

But the refugee thought a score of lies would serve her purpose better than the simple truth, and she pushed her application with that kind of desperation a doubtful attorney does, a doubtful cause, when he apprehends the arrival of some counter testimony that may upset his cause.

Means were levied from all quarters—sumptuous dinners were given to one class, appeals of sympathy made to another, promises were extended to a third, her own smiles were bestowed upon all who had votes to give, and her more particular favors extended toward the choicer few. Eloquent advocates were found in both Houses, the suppliant, pining, weeping (but always fat) refugee, was an honored guest at the mansion of the President, and the proposition to give this Amazonian heroine a million of acres of land (more or less), was coming

to a vote! A lucky accident sent the Bill to the tomb of the Capulets, and saved our reputation as a nation, from going there itself. Certain gentlemen who had their own reasons for what they did (every man has his reasons, and the devil too), lamented with the fair one over this unexpected calamity—they even went so far as to pass round a subscription, and quite a sum was pledged. But they had mistaken their customer—She, “the last of her race, and *such* a race, accept charity? Not she! Oh! no! A million or nothing.”

Thanks to the sagacity, or the discretion, or the independence of somebody, the nation was saved from a disgrace that would have covered our name in every quarter of the globe. It would have been a fine story to have been told in Paris, where her pranks are known, that the Congress of the Great American Republic had been humbugged, not only into solemn debate about so filthy a subject, but had voted a province of land to a woman who is known in Europe as “the mistress of a hundred men.” To cap all, had she outwitted the grey-haired Senators of the Republic, on the most essential point of the whole, viz: that she was the only descendant of Vespuccius, instead of being, as she was, but one of five children, and deserving not even six feet of American earth—it would have made us a bye-word to the world. But we were preserved from such utter disgrace. Honor to the noble men who saved us!

Foiled in her base attempt, the bold adventuress

retreated in mortification from the Capitol and soon left the Continent. The facts were never fully known to our people; and in the gay world of London, chaperoned by a gay and dissolute nobleman, she had a short, but not a brilliant career. The English are not so convenient game for such characters—their blood is too cold. She fortunately fell in with a gentleman who did his best to make her a heroine; but the plan failed. For a time she was admitted to good society. I happened at this period to be in London (1840), and saw her one evening at the house of Wm. Beatte, Esq. Her arms were bare as usual, with her scars of Liberty full in view; and I heard her tell that night, the same old story about fighting in the open field astride of her charger, I forget how many days and nights, &c., &c.

But it was soon convenient for her to quit England. She found friends who found her in money, till at last she fell in with a high-life *roué*, who gave her an “asylum from the ingratitude of an American Congress, under the sheltering walls and trellises of an Italian villa at Ogdensburgh.” So much for the history of this woman, who has done what she could to dishonor her own name, and blast the hopes of her kindred.

Her sisters had for a long time had no communication with her, and they had only learned of the failure of her application to our Government, by common report in Italy. They felt mortified and chagrined beyond expression. “We did hope,”

they said to me, “that a frank and honorable appeal to the sympathies of your generous nation would have been responded to, with magnanimity. We did not feel that we had any *claim* to your bounty; we knew that all the world give Columbus the glory of the discovery of America. They say it is more than enough that Vesputius give his name to the American Continent. (He had nothing to do with this.) But still we rejoice that the application that was made was rejected. Injustice would have been done to all parties, by a grant, from which we should have received no advantage nor honor; and such strange conduct as our sister was guilty of, deserved no better reward. But we hope you will tell the facts to your Government, that no portion of the blame may fall on us. If the day shall ever come, that your Congress shall show any recognition of us, as the descendants of the Discoverer, whatever way they may select of doing it, it will fill us with gratitude. It would, indeed, be an inspiring hope, if we could believe it would ever be realized, that we should one day be able to provide ourselves with a home in the New World, and go and live there, and be buried at last in the soil our father was the first to step on. Do you think we should be kindly received among the Americans, after we have been so badly represented there?”

I could not but feel, when I saw the tears fall from the sisters' cheeks, how deeply, how cruelly they had been injured. Nor could I help breathing to

them the hope that when all the facts should be known, to our people and our Congress, something for them would be done. The expression of this hope seemed to flash a gleam of joy and cheerfulness over their countenances; and when I remembered that our people are a generous people, I could not believe this hope would ever be clouded by disappointment.

They brought out a few relics of Vespuccius. At last they unrolled their genealogical table, which showed a proud race. Their ancestry can be traced back clearly in one bright line, to the early ages, before Peter the Hermit went over Europe to arouse its millions to march to the recovery of the Saviour's tomb. In that line there were many illustrious men. Warriors, Ambassadors, Naval Heroes and Discoverers, Scholars, Artists, Poets and Magistrates, many of whom had formed alliances with the great and the noble of different countries. They had filled the highest stations in the old Republic of Florence, and left their impress upon their times. They had been the familiar companions of kings and princes, lived in their own palaces and been lords of their own estates. How were they now?

They are greatly attached to the Grand Duke; and they told me he has always shown them great kindness. They are indebted to his generosity for an annual pension, which was decreed by the Signory of Florence to the Discoverer ages ago, and which every successive sovereign has regarded.

Such is the veneration still felt for the memory of that wonderful man who has shed so much glory over Tuscany. This pension is necessarily small, for the Grand Duke's revenue is inconsiderable; and a great number of poor and unfortunate individuals look to him for assistance. His aid is never denied, and the kind and delicate manner in which it is bestowed, makes it a thousand times more grateful. But I shall speak of the generous and paternal character of this noble Sovereign by and by.

It was a long visit—we talked till midnight—and when I came away, I could not but feel grateful that a casual, but kind word that fell from my lips the evening before, had secured for me the opportunity of shedding some light upon hearts that had so long been overcast with the deepest gloom.

A day or two after, I received a call from the learned and courteous Count Græberg de Hemso, Chamberlain and Librarian to the Grand Duke, with an invitation to be present the following evening at a presentation at court. These Drawing Rooms, which are held during Lent, are attended without parade; and I was glad of an opportunity of seeing a Prince who had, by his mild, paternal government, won the love of his own subjects—by his enlightened views of Art, Government, and Literature, the respect of all Europe—and by his kindness and attention to literary men, gained their admiration and esteem.

During the conversation (which I have no hesita-

tion in relating, since he has often expressed the same feelings, and does not conceal them anywhere), he alluded kindly to the interest I had manifested in behalf of the Vespucci family (which was the first intimation I had of his knowing what I had said or done). He said "he regretted most deeply the unfortunate circumstances which attended the application made to our Government in favor of the Vespucci," and he asked me if I "thought it would have succeeded if it had been properly made." I could not but express the fullest belief that it would.

"It is really a pity, then," said he, "that the indiscretion of that lady should have placed it out of the power of your Government, to have done an act of generosity, which would have placed that unfortunate family under such lasting obligation. I regret it deeply, too, for another reason; for I lost so fine an opportunity of being myself placed under an obligation I should have been equally sensible of, to a great and free People, who are advancing more rapidly in the arts and sciences, and in all that constitutes true civilisation, than any other nation in the world. You think a kind feeling will still prevail in America towards the Vespucci when the facts are known; and I must say I know of no act of a foreign Government, that could afford me so much satisfaction, as that your Congress should publicly recognize the claim of the descendants of our Great Tuscan to your kind remembrance."

The Grand Duke courteously told me, that although

it did not become him to interfere in the matter, nor to do anything in his public capacity, "particularly, said he, "as no interchange of diplomatic courtesies exists between my Court and the President, which I regret, yet, if you can suggest any manner in which I can contribute to the consummation of your own views, it will afford me unmingled pleasure to do so." He had the kindness also to say, that at any time it would give him much satisfaction to receive any communication from me on the subject, or a visit from me at the Palace.

The Grand Duke has now gone down to the Maremma. Knowing it was my intention to leave Tuscany soon, he obligingly sent me an invitation to visit him there, when he would have leisure to confer with me on the subject.

Believing this chit-chat about the Discoverer and his children may interest you, I will tell you the rest as soon as the rest comes.

But now I am tired, and so are you.

Your true,—&c., &c.

LETTER III.

Florence, 1845.

DEAR —,

THIS morning just as daylight was breaking, I was woke by the chiming of the sweet bells of the churches, calling the worshippers to their altars to pray for the dead. I dressed hastily and went to the Santa Croce. It was an early spring morning, but there was no chill in the air. Everything was quiet; and the soft, deep notes of the bells broke over the palaces, and rolled lazily away towards the green hills. The Convent of Fiesole, nestled in its solemn cypresses, lifted its old grey walls towards heaven, and the earliest sunbeams were playing around them.

And there stood Santa Croce, the Pantheon of Florence, with its rude, dark walls reared six hundred years ago, with its mysterious history, and its more mysterious dead! It was the resting-place of four men who never knew what repose was, till they were gathered there for the last sleep—four men, to whose tombs Liberty, and Truth, and Genius have come to weep, and gone away to struggle on till their work was done—four men, whose names will

be dear to the world till its records are blotted out for ever.

As I crossed the threshold and a full view of this magnificent temple burst upon me, with its "long-drawn aisles" and illuminated altars—its superbly sculptured monuments, covering their treasured dust—its massive rafters, rude as they grew in their own forests;—all that is sublime in Art, sacred in Christianity, and immortal in genius seemed to sweep over my soul! Worshippers were kneeling around every altar, and every head was bowed in prayer;—they were praying for those whom they loved who were dead! There, was an old man, over whose head the snows of seventy years had fallen; he was clothed in a mantle, worn so thin, it betokened poverty; but not deep want. He seemed, like an aged hemlock, to have had all his green branches torn away; and as he lifted his look to heaven, I saw, for the first time in my life, a living illustration, which could not be mistaken, of those touching words—

"I weary on a far dim strand,
Whose mansions are as tombs;
And long to find the father-land,
Where there are many homes."

His companion had been long taken from him; and, one after another, his children had followed her. He might have believed they were all now in heaven, but it did not seem strange to me he should come to that altar to pray for, and commune with his dead.

Near him there was a bright-eyed little boy of five years, kneeling on the step of the same altar—by him knelt a plainly-dressed female, who was, evidently, his governess. He wore a richly embroidered mantle of black velvet, which bespoke his noble birth, and the crape over it showed his mother was dead. He, too, was in prayer; and as he turned away his sweet face to heaven, with his yellow hair falling in ringlets over his little mantle, and clasped his little hands earnestly as he prayed for his lost mother, I thought it a more touching scene than even Raphael himself had ever painted. How hard, thought I, for that child to believe, even if he were told so, that it was wrong for him to pray for his mother. A little further on, were clustered a family around what seemed to be their own altar. Their heads were all bowed low;—I saw a place vacant, which was once filled, probably, by the father—he was not there now.

Along the aisles, before the altars, by the sides of pillars and monuments, several hundred persons were kneeling; each one had lost some friend he loved, and each one knew best his own sorrows. I had been educated to believe that on such a scene, Heaven could not look with approbation; but my heart could not reprove the mourner for seeking consolation in prayer. I did not feel disposed to disturb the still worshippers, nor break the silence that wrapt the temple. Suddenly, it struck me that I was but an intruder among a crowd of wor-

shippers ;—throughout the church all were kneeling but myself. No one had seemed yet to notice me ; for all were intent upon the business that had brought them there. “I will not,” thought I, “be the only careless spectator in God’s temple,—it is the sanctuary for prayer.” And I leaned against the side of a lofty monument, which lifted itself high over my head, and gave myself up to the influence of the place. “These are mourners who have come here to think of loved ones who are dead. Many of them died long ago, but the survivor’s religion tells him, he must cherish the memory of his lost friends while he lives himself, and his Church has consecrated certain days in the year for this affecting purpose. And has not my heart, too, been stricken ? Have I not lost those I loved best, long ago ? And the graves of my mother, of my brother, of loved ones over whose dust the green grass has waved in many a summer’s breeze—came to my fancy from beyond the sea ; and I saw their bright faces and sweet smiles once more, and heard their kind voices as they sounded by our own fireside long ago. And then came back “the light of other days.”

“ The smiles, the tears of childhood’s years,
The words of love then spoken ;
The eyes that shone, now dimm’d and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken.”

And then came stealing down the aisles the solemn chant of the prayers for the dead—with its dying

scene, the last struggle, the bursting away of the spirit, the opening of the golden gates, and the greeting of the Redeemed soul to Heaven. It was no more real, than the vision I had just seen of the home of my childhood, and the smile of my mother, and I did not think where it came from. At last the deep silence of the church startled me; I looked around me, and the temple was deserted; I looked above me, and saw, cut upon the tomb where I was kneeling, the name of Michael Angelo Buonarotti!

It is the proudest tomb in Italy, and I had come to it as the devout pilgrim goes to the shrine of Loretto. Casting my eye up the aisle, there were, side by side, the monuments and the ashes of Machiavelli the martyr of Liberty, of Galileo, the martyr of Science, of Alfieri the restless soul of Tragedy. For the time, these men filled the vision of centuries—their genius swept across the whole field of History, and the rest of the world was to me as though it had never been.

Your true—

LETTER IV.

Florence, —, 1845.

DEAR —,

WHEN I left the grave of Michael Angelo, I came back to my cell, and took up the writings of M. Legouve, who has read the deep soul of that wonderful man, more profoundly than any writer I know. I read with my pen in my hand, and what I liked I have taken down. Some parts I have translated nearly literally—some I have altered, and others I have omitted altogether as objectionable, and many things I have added which I thought necessary, to illustrate more perfectly the character of Buonarotti. M. Legouve would not excuse me, I know, if I should call this a translation, so I will deliver him from all responsibility, nor will I ask you to give me any credit for the composition. But throwing all this aside, let us read what I will call Passages from the Life and Times of Michael Angelo. When I think of the days of the Revival of Arts and of Letters, the image of the great Buonarotti rises on my vision like some colossal form, beaming with light and clothed in strength. He seems to stand firm and everlasting in the flow of ages—concentrating in himself all that was great, and all that was dear to man, in the struggles of liberty and truth, and the advancement of the Arts in those times.

PASSAGES FROM THE LIFE AND TIMES OF
MICHAEL ANGELO.

It was a *Painter* named Michael Angelo who made the "Last Judgment." It was a *Sculptor* named Michael Angelo who cut "The Statue of Moses." It was an *Architect*, named Michael Angelo, who built "St. Peter's." It was a *Poet*, named Michael Angelo, who wrote the finest "Sonnets" of the Italian tongue, since Petrarch. It would perhaps be better to stop after these few lines, and call them the Great Man's Biography—for what language can convey an idea of Buonarotti so well as the simple enumeration of his works? But his life, even in its darkest parts, is so full of light and instruction, it seems almost a duty to relate it.

The 6th of March, 1474, on Sunday, at 8 o'clock in the evening, was born at Chiusi, in Tuscany, of Ludovico Buonarotti, Mayor of the town, a man-child, whom they called Michael Angelo. This Buonarotti was descended from the long line of the Counts of Canossa. When the boy could hold the mallet in one hand and the chisel in the other, he told his father he would be a sculptor; but his father told him he should not; it was all idle to tell him that a sculptor was not a mason, for the good old Count who carried a sword at his side, could only think of plaster when the boy spoke of marble. But

Michael Angelo, like Dante, and Homer, and Shakspeare, and Milton, had his mission to fulfil, and it mattered little what the old Count of Canossa thought of chisels and plaster—his boy's chisel was yet to give the world those mysterious creations, that will excite the wonder of all coming times. But Michael Angelo was not a man to dishonor the noble race he sprung from, even in the judgment of his own Feudal Times. Pride of race is something that never dies, even in the finest minds; and after he became illustrious, and scholars flocked to him from every part of Italy, he would receive none but *gentlemen*.

His first master was Ghirlandaio. He was about fourteen years of age when he began, and he soon made such progress his master used to say—"It's strange enough, but this child can already teach his master." One day, the old sculptor gave his scholars a fish to copy. At the appointed time, they all brought their works to the Master. As usual, Michael Angelo's was better than all the rest, and superior to the model. The old Master's curiosity was excited beyond measure, and he asked the boy how he had made his work so perfect—so much like life and nature. The answer was given. "I tried," said he, "to make a fish like yours, and I could not, and so I went to the fisherman's house in the evening to see his fish yet alive, and liking one of them better than yours, I thought I would copy it, and here it is." He never made a figure which

he did not copy from nature—it was his love of the true and the beautiful, which, later in life, made him perform those long and laborious works of anatomy, to which he owed his immense power of representation. He bought dead bodies of men and animals, skinned them, dissected them, and found every bone, and muscle, and nerve; and standing whole days and nights, chisel in hand, over their bodies, he studied their structure, traced with great care the play of the most delicate fibres, and transferred it all to the canvass and the marble. In these solitary and dreadful tasks, he used to spend whole days and nights without eating, drinking, or sleeping, till he became so weak he had to give over his work, or fall to the floor. The world has never known anything like this; and were I asked the name of the hardest working man of whom we have any record, I would at once write down that of Michael Angelo.

But we go back to his young days again, and see what they tell us of his boyhood. Garananio took the boy one day to the gardens of the Medici at San Marco. Lorenzo de' Medici had adorned the garden with the most beautiful ancient and modern statues. Michael Angelo had no sooner walked round it, than he would no longer bear the name of his master Ghirlandaio mentioned, or the Studio of the Artists. "This garden shall be my master," said he. And, after this, for a long time, the young sculptor used to go there at day-light, and pass all the day till night stopped his work—cutting stone

and marble. One day he found the head of an old fawn, with a long beard and laughing mouth. This fragment, damaged as it was, he considered so beautiful and full of life, he determined to reproduce it in marble, and, in a few days, the work was done. He had supplied all the deficiencies of the model, and had also made a wide open mouth, and thirty-two laughing teeth, all finished with great beauty. In the meantime, Lorenzo de' Medici passing through his gardens, saw the child at work on the head. He approached him, and gazed on the work with the greatest astonishment. Yet, in the midst of his praises, he said to the child, patting his cheek, "My boy, thou hast made this fawn old, and yet thou hast left him all his teeth! How is this? Art thou not aware that, at that age, there are always some wanting?" This was said in a laughing mood, but the Prince had no sooner gone, than young Buonarrotti knocked out a tooth from his old fawn—made a hole in the gum as if the tooth had fallen out by age, and waited with impatience for the return of Lorenzo de' Medici. He returned, and praised the docility and talent of the child, who was only fifteen years old, took him into his palace, and sent a message to his father to come and visit him. At first the old noble would not go, for he knew Lorenzo de' Medici encouraged his son "to become a mason." At last he was prevailed on to go. The Medici begged of him to leave his son with him, promising he should one day become the

most illustrious of all who had ever borne the Buonarrotti name. The father only replied, that he and his family were at the disposal of his excellency—his will, he would not resist, but he wanted his boy to come home ! Lorenzo de Medici asked him with kindness what were his pursuits ? “ I have never done anything,” he answered, “ but watch over the estate left me by my ancestors, and wear a sword at my side.”

But Michael Angelo would not go back, and he was therefrom installed in the palace of that munificent Prince, and treated by him as one of his own children. He made him sit at his table, and took pleasure in showing him all his medals, antique works of art, precious stones, interesting himself in conversing about Art with this child of genius. And when Lorenzo the Magnificent died, Pietro, his son and successor, continued the same friendship and favor to Michael Angelo, which caused his old father, seeing his son *the stone-cutter* on a footing with the highest personages at court,—to begin to think better of the business, and provide him better clothes and a little money to spend. In the meantime, the excesses of Pietro de' Medici had aroused the indignation of all Florence, and a revolution was daily expected to break out. One day a young man named Cardiere; attached also to the court, went all in tears, and throwing himself into the arms of Michael Angelo, told him that Lorenzo de' Medici had appeared to him in a dream, in a black dress all torn,

and commanded him to go and tell his son, that if he did not change his conduct, he would soon be driven from Florence. Michael Angelo besought him to go and immediately obey the vision, but Pietro de' Medici was so violent, the young Cardiere had not the courage to do it. The next morning he returned to Michael Angelo, and told him Lorenzo had appeared to him again, and given him a blow on the face because he had not delivered his message. This time Buonarotti's counsel prevailed, and the young man set out on foot for Carregi, one of the villas of the Medici, and throwing himself at the feet of the Prince, told him the dream. Pietro and his court mocked him, and the poor youth returned overwhelmed with grief and shame, to cast himself once more on the bosom of his beloved Buonarotti, who, believing the dream an intimation from Heaven, fled in a few days from Florence, and went over to Bologna. A month after, the dream became a history. Florence rose in revolution, and Pietro de' Medici was driven from the halls and the birth-place of his fathers!

After visiting Bologna and Venice, Michael Angelo, about twenty-four years old, went to Rome, and executed his first great work. Those who have visited St. Peter's, will remember there is, on the right hand, as you enter a chapel called *della Virgine della Febbre*, a group in marble which represents Mary holding her son. I know nothing more painful to gaze on than this composition. The marble

weeps and suffers—there is a languor in all the members of Christ, a despair in the figure of the mother, which drains your tears, if you have ever held on your shoulder the dying head of some one you loved. **C**ertain critics have, however, reproached the sculptor with having made the Virgin *too young*. Anticipating all these cavils of low taste, the great master once said to his scholar Condovi,—“Can they not remember that chaste women preserve their bloom and youth much longer than others, and above all a virgin like Mary, in whose heart never throbbed the least impure passion to fade the harmonizing beauty of her form! Moreover, this flower of youth, may it not have been preserved by Heaven, as a beautiful model of virginity and purity? But her son may not be made young, for as he would take upon him the body of man, and submit to all mortal miseries except sin, he ought to bear with him the distinctive traces of time. I have represented only a man—a man who has suffered more than other men! These are the reasons why I have made him old, and his mother young.”

This group is moreover the only one on which Michael Angelo has inscribed his name, and the circumstances were these. Entering the church one day, he saw a large number of travellers from Lombardy standing around the altar, gazing on the marble group. It was an unanimous concert of praise, so great was the admiration of the strangers. Said one of them, “Who is the author of this great

work?" "It's our famous Milanese sculptor Ghibbo," was the reply. Michael Angelo said nothing, but left the church, determined it should be the last time such a mistake was made. That night he went secretly to the church with a lamp and a chisel, and cut his name on the girdle that surrounds the body of the virgin!

While he was in Rome, he heard that the Republic of Florence had offered a commission for competition, and although the sum to be paid for it was only 400 crowns, he determined to return to his country. He did, and his first work was the celebrated statue of David, which is one of his most stupendous and perfect works. He afterwards made a Madonna in bronze, with the infant in her arms—the Colossus of Marble before the gateway of the palace of the Municipality, which is called *the Giant*—and finally he executed the famous cartoon, drawn from the war of Pisa, which was preferred to one by the great Leonardo da Vinci.—A word on the history of this wonderful painting.

The illustrious Leonardo da Vinci was commissioned to paint the great Hall of Council. Pietro Soderini, their *Gonfaloniere di Giustizia*, loving and admiring Michael Angelo, desired that a part of the work should be put into his hands, and it was done. He chose that portion best adapted to his genius—for his favorite subject was the human form, in its most impassioned attitudes. The subject is drawn from the war of Florence against Pisa—the time, the

heat of the summer day, and the scene, the banks of the Arno. The Florentine soldiers have taken off their garments and laid aside their arms, and are bathing in the river. Suddenly a cry of war is heard on the plain—it is the battle-shout of the Pisans, who are rushing upon the camp. The Florentine soldiers fly from the river to seize their arms—some are hastily putting on their cuirasses—others throwing themselves on horseback nearly naked—the drummers appear on the field, beating the recall—it is a confusion, a general and impetuous movement, and there is an anger, a courage, a hope, a despair, and a strife for glory, that fix you like a statue to the spot while you gaze. The whole cartoon seems to tremble with the rush of the advancing multitude, and you almost hear the groans of dying men. Among a host of figures in all positions, each bearing the marks of some strong passion, every one is distinct—every one as desperately bent upon his glorious struggle as if the weight of the whole battle hung on his arm. Who that has seen it will ever forget the old man, dressing, on the verge of the stream? He had covered his head with a wreath of ivy, to shield it from the heat of the sun while bathing. With the rest he had rushed from the river as the call to the rescue sounded, and is now pulling on his garments to get ready for the slaughter; but his limbs are so wet he cannot draw on his clothes, and hearing the shout of his countrymen as they rush on the foe, despair is mingling with firm desperation

on every feature, while he draws with all the strength of a strong man. You see the muscles of his body stretched like hempen cords—he suffers as only few men can suffer—agony is painted out clear from the very ends of his hair to the soles of his feet—he fears he shall be too late for the rescue. You gaze, and gaze on, and wonder still, although it was painted by Michael Angelo.

When the cartoon was opened for spectators, an universal shout of admiration rung through the great hall, and there was not a young painter who did not go to study it, from Raphael to Andrea del Sarto. Unfortunately, in later times, it was carried to the Palace of the Medici, and abandoned to the hands of artists, who almost stripped it to fragments to carry off pieces.

Buonarotti was now twenty-nine years old, and he was regarded as the greatest master of his age. Julius II., successor of Alexander VI., invited him to Rome to build his tomb. Almano, treasurer of the Pope, gave him a thousand ducats, and he set out for Carrara with two attendants to get the marble for what he intended should be the great work of his life. He remained at the marble quarries more than eight months, alone, subsisting on the coarsest fare, exploring the caves and ledges; happy in the midst of those huge blocks, in which his genius saw sleeping master-pieces—for Michael Angelo loved marble as other men love *life*; and as we see in living things symmetry, beauty and per-

fection, so in every block of marble, he saw human forms with all their muscles, fibres and passions. One day in the midst of those impressive solitudes, standing on the summit of a hill which overlooks the Mediterranean, he conceived the grand design of erecting on that lone peak an immense colossal statue, which should have appeared to the sailor from afar, as a protecting divinity; but he never found time nor means to execute it. What a world would ours be if the ideals of genius could, like those of God, be executed as soon as formed; and that Michael Angelo could say, *let the statue of Moses be*—and see the noble form rise in majesty at his bidding; to call the mysterious temple of St. Peter into being at a word; to conceive the last Judgment—and with the conception behold the finished work! But such is not the province of genius; and the greatest ideals of the Michael Angelos and the Raphaels, can never be executed by one short-lived man. Even the Cathedral of Florence was almost three centuries in building. The magical Duomo, at Milan, has exhausted the Christian tribute of six hundred years; and it not only lacks fifteen hundred statues, but it never will be completed till ages enough have rolled away to crumble the massive pile to the dust.

At last all the marbles were chosen and prepared, and taken to Rome in the Piazza of St. Peter—enough, says a Roman writer, to erect an impregnable castle. The Pontiff was delighted when he saw the work

begun ; and the great sculptor, having at last found something to do, worthy of his genius, began with enthusiasm. Already the design of this gigantic work was finished. The artist had cast forty statues, without enumerating the *bassi-relievi* to adorn the tomb ; and Julius, in his fondness for Michael Angelo, caused a drawbridge to be swung from his apartments to his laboratory, that he might more easily communicate with the workmen, and the noble structure was going on prosperously, and Buonarotti reposed from his labors at the table of his munificent patron, and heard his praises uttered in the streets and court of the Pontifical city.

But evil days were coming on Michael Angelo. So many favors from the Pope, and so sudden and brilliant a fame, soon excited the envy of those near the court, who could neither admire the genius of the sculptor nor rival his creations. At that time there was an artist by the name of Bramante in great repute at Rome. He was an architect of talent, and a man of pleasure and indulgence. His patron, too, was Julius II. It had been considered by the architect that all monumental works at Rome devolved by right upon himself, and he manifested no little uneasiness at the presence of a man like Michael Angelo. He was a cunning and an adroit man, and greatly loved by the Pope. He had already laid his plan for the overthrow of his dangerous rival. He declared to Julius, it was a bad omen to have his tomb built ; and the superficial, craven,

superstitious man believed it, and became disgusted with the project. At last Buonarotti received his remaining marbles for the work, and called on the Pontiff for money to pay the workmen, as he had been instructed to do by Julius himself. The Pope was engaged and could not see him till the next day. Michael Angelo went home, and feeling he ought not to make the poor men wait who had brought him the marble, paid them with his own money. The next morning he went to the Vatican, and while waiting in the Hall of Audience, a servant came and told him he had orders from his Holiness not to allow him to enter. A bishop present, hearing the words of the attendant, said to him, "Thou dost not know the man thou art speaking to." "Alas!" he replied, "I know him well; but I must obey the orders of my master." Michael Angelo, who was not in the habit of making long ante-chambers at the doors of princes, revolted with disgust and indignation, and turning towards the door-keeper said, angrily, "Tell your Pope when he wants me, he must seek me in another place." He then returns hastily to his house—bids his servants instantly sell all his goods—mounts a fleet horse, and after several hours of hard riding, stops at the castle of Poggibonsi on the frontier of the Florentine State, beyond the jurisdiction of the Pope. He had scarcely leaped from his dying horse that had borne him so nobly, than five couriers of Julius II. came dashing up, on foaming steeds, with orders to bring Michael Angelo

back to Rome, by fair means or foul, as best they could! They show the letter of the Pontiff, commanding him instantly to return on pain of death and damnation. Michael Angelo refuses! The envoys, knowing the violence of Julius, threaten to kill him on the spot, if he dares to disobey the Pontifical mandate. Vain hope to intimidate such a man by Papal thunders, or the menace of death! They find he is unmoved by their threats. At last they entreat him, at least, to write his refusal to the Pope, and he takes a pen and writes: "You have outraged a good and faithful servant. You have driven me like a dog from your capitol. I will return to you no more—I am free." With these firm words he dismissed the envoys, and went on to Florence.

On receiving this letter, the fury of Julius II., the mistaken German soldier, so violently brave, so fond of war and the sabre, so happy when he could put a casque on his tiara, and go and fight against the French,—Julius II. went into a rage impossible to describe. "You dare answer him, No! Michael Angelo?" was the astonished reply of all the courtiers. He sent three briefs, one after another, to Florence, that they should deliver up Michael Angelo under pain of anathema, war and all vengeance, spiritual and temporal. Pietro Soderini, friend of Buonarrotti, sent for him, and said: "You have done that to the Pope, which a King of France would not have dared to do—do allow yourself to be entreated; moreover, we cannot undertake a war

for you, therefore go and reconcile yourself to Julius at Rome." The sculptor answered: "No; I like better to go to Constantinople. The Grand Turk has made me generous offers through ~~the~~ brothers of San Francesco; and I am preparing to set out immediately." Soderini, seeing his firmness and knowing he was a man to execute his word, replied: "Well, listen—return to Rome; but go as Ambassador from the Florentine Republic. This title will place you in your true rank, and protect you from the Pontiff's rage." Michael Angelo accepted.

In the mean time, Julius, having gone to Bologna to punish a revolt, Buonarotti, the Ambassador, repaired thither; and in a few days presented himself to his Holiness, while at his banquet table. When he saw the sculptor he assumed a look of indignant wrath, and exclaimed: "It was *your* place to come and present yourself before *us*, at our Court in Rome, and you have waited till we *came* to you." Michael Angelo kneeled and asked his clemency, declaring it was not ingratitude that made *him* leave Rome, but he could not bear such treatment. The Pope sat silent for a moment, with his head down and his whole body convulsed with rage. A bishop, sent by Soderini to excuse Michael Angelo, interposed. "Let not your Holiness," said he, "~~remember~~ his fault; he only sinned through ignorance. Put these artists away from your presence; they are all stupid fellows." Julius answered with a storm of passion: "How is *this*, sir? You insult him

when I did not. It is you who are the stupid fellow; get out from my presence—get you gone there!” and with a gesture from his Holiness, the *Monsignor* was unceremoniously dismissed.

Having exhausted all his wrath upon the bishop, Julius took Michael Angelo by the hand, and said: “Before I leave Bologna, I will have you make a fine statue of myself, in bronze, to be placed on the church of San Petronio.” “Well,” said the sculptor, “it shall be done;” and in a few days he brought him the model. The statue was in a standing attitude, the right hand seemed raised to utter a benediction—in the left there was nothing. “Shall I put a book in that hand?” inquired the master. “A book!” answered Julius,—“I am no reader. No; put a sword.” Afterwards, when the work was done, and the sword (to please the Pope) put into the right hand, which held it with a gallant, warlike action, said Julius to Buonarotti: “How now, does your statue give blessing or curse?” “It threatens to chastise,” said he, “the people of Bologna, if they are not wise.” The Bolognese threw down the statue, and with the bronze, cast a piece of artillery which they called *the Julia*. As for the Pope, he did not call them to an account for the bold insolence; for he was too soon called to his last account himself.

But his death did not occur too soon to prevent him from once more guiding the genius of the Sculptor. Pope and Artist returned to Rome.

Julius would hear no more of the tomb—he was too weak-minded to conquer his superstition, and too proud to change his purpose. Seeing his powerful and dreaded enemy once more in Rome, Bramante again began to plot his ruin. He wished to divert him from sculpture to painting, where he would find himself in the lists with the young Raphael—that glorious star that had risen in the East, to proclaim that a brighter day for the arts was breaking. Raphael was very young—his beard ungrown—but he was fast distancing all competition. The plot was well laid.

Through the counsels of Bramante, who had now assumed an air of great friendship for Michael Angelo, the Pope gave him to paint the vault of the Chapel of the Vatican. Buonarotti did not call himself a painter, nor did he think a great deal of the Art—and here in the Vatican he had to paint by the side of Raphael, to whom another portion of the *frescos* had been assigned. Bramante did not doubt his plot would succeed, and he awaited with eager malignity the hour of his triumph! Michael Angelo was summoned before the Pontiff, and ordered to paint the Chapel. He refused, saying Painting was not his art—that the vault was an immense work, and Raphael would succeed much better than himself. “I beg your Holiness,” said he, “to give the commission to my young friend Raphael, while I keep to my marbles.” “I will have you do it yourself,” was the firm reply of the Pontiff—

and his manner showed his purpose was fixed. "I will try, then," was also the only reply of Michael Angelo.

Buonarotti had never painted a *fresco*, and it was a trying crisis for his fame. He called from Florence some fresco painters, who were his friends, to assist him. Among them, were the celebrated Granano, Bagiardini, Angelo di Dominichino, and Aristotile. They commenced the work, and showed him their style of painting. But he soon saw they would never do—that he must surpass them, or be ruined. One morning, after a sleepless night, he went early to the Chapel, and shut himself in, refusing admittance to his friends, the Pope himself, and all the world. He destroyed all his Florentine friends had done, and commenced the work himself. And here he stayed whole days and nights without leaving the Chapel—with not a friend to converse with or counsel him, and not even a scholar to prepare his colors. The mystery by which he surrounded himself, only inflamed public curiosity; for, like the ancient priests of Egypt, he shut himself up from the living world to commune with God, and with spirits, while the people awaited his appearance without the threshold, to tell the secrets of the invisible world. There is a strange enthusiasm for Art in Italy; and this sentiment was far deeper in the Middle Ages than it ever was before or has been since. Nothing was spoken of in Rome, but the fresco of Michael Angelo, and the anxiety to see

the work became indescribable. The Pope participated in the general feeling, and was continually asking the Painter when he would open the chapel to the Roman people, to chant a solemn mass, and hear its echoes in that sublime vault. When one half was finished, the popular feeling became so intense, Julius dared not chafe them by a longer delay, and he prevailed upon Michael Angelo to uncover the portion done, to be seen by the eager thousands—he did. All Rome was filled with wild joy and enthusiasm, and Buonarotti's name was on every tongue.

Chagrined and stung by the triumph of his great enemy, Bramante commenced his plots once more. He tried to persuade the Pontiff to commit the unfinished portion to Raphael, hoping he would either excel Michael Angelo, or that he would at least suffer the mortification of being arrested in the progress of his noble fresco. Julius refused, and Michael Angelo again resumed his work. But the impatience and fretful turbulence of Julius, prevented him from giving the last touch to the second part. He went every day to the Painter, and was every day surprised to find that the fresco had advanced in the night. "When will you have done?" was his daily question. "When I am satisfied myself," was Buonarotti's daily reply. "You wish, then," at last exclaimed Julius, "that I should have you hurled down from the scaffold." "This, you will not do," thought the Painter; and the Pontiff had

no sooner left the chapel, than he uncovered the picture, and brought the scaffold to the ground !

It was the day of All Saints—the chapel was filled with enraptured thousands—admiration knew no bounds. Several portions of the work were incomplete, and some touches in blue and gold were yet to be given, but this did not dampen the general enthusiasm. Julius the Second, his first ardor cooled off, wished Buonarotti to do these slight improvements, but the Artist was not to be made the sport even of pontifical folly, and he replied it was of little consequence. “ There are places which ought to be covered with gold,” said Julius. “ I do not see that men are covered with gold in our times,” replied the Painter, “ and besides, my characters here are poor men, who would look bad in gold.” Thus passed off with a jest, the Pope’s request, and the work was never finished. He painted twenty months on this picture, and for it the Pontiff gave him three thousand ducats.

Julius the Second died, and was succeeded by Leo X., whose pontificate has been so brilliantly illustrated by the elegant pen of Roscoe. Clement VII. succeeded Leo, and Paul III. followed him—a period into which more great events were crowded than any other of which history has transmitted to us the memorials. For all these Pontiffs Buonarotti worked, and their reigns, and palaces, and churches, were illustrated and adorned, by his chisel and pencil. But we must pass over many of his works and years

in silence, for we are only giving *passages* from his life.

Under the pontificate of Paul III. he executed his other great fresco, The Last Judgment, an admirable *pendant* to The Creation. "I remember," says the beautiful writer from whom I have borrowed so freely in these pages, "the day when I saw this master-piece—it was Friday. We had visited St. Peter's, and the guide asked if I would see The Last Judgment. While entering the church I felt a strange emotion of curiosity and recollection. At first I could hardly distinguish a figure in the fresco, for ages had faded out the rich coloring, and confounded the lines, and the picture itself seemed as black as one dead of the last judgment. But by degrees, the figures became clear, and the first thing I saw distinctly was a man in the air, his form gathered like one sitting in solitary gloom—his elbow on his right knee, the hands spread over half the face, so that only one of his eyes was visible, but that eye was so terrible, and opened so wildly, that it frightened me while I gazed on it. It was the figure of a man who had just been judged, and condemned by the Almighty. While looking on this sad figure, which seemed as though it had been painted with tears, the general design of the entire picture unfolded itself. At the top, standing in the heavens, with a cloud at his feet, surrounded by saints, martyrs, and angels, is the Son of God. His look is terrible—His outstretched arm separates the good

from the wicked, and drives the latter from his presence to everlasting fire. Beneath Him are the Seven Angels described in the Apocalypse, with the seven last trumpets, calling the dead to judgment from the four corners of the earth. Two of them hold in their hands an open book, in which are written the destinies of the uncounted myriads who are flocking to judgment. On the left hand stretch away below the eternal flames, and on the right is the earth, which opens its tombs and renders up their dead. At every blast of the trumpet the graves are breaking open, and amidst the wild confusion spread on every side, the terror-stricken race are flocking up to hear their doom. According to the prophecy of Ezekiel, a portion have only regained their bones—others are half clothed in flesh—some stand naked, trembling as they gaze upwards, and others are dragging along their grave-clothes, with which they try to shield their nakedness! When I gazed on this part of the painting, tears rose to my eyes, and I could not check them,—such is the look of these dead called to judgment. Look! look! how this one stands up, starting out of the death-sleep, with open sockets where there are eyes no longer, a mouth where there are no teeth—and thou, poor dead, whose ashy head is just rising out of this grave—and thou, whose body is nearly buried in the earth,—how pale! how ghostly pale! Thou art not yet awake! thy eyes are shut, but life begins to show itself on the upper lip, which moves, as if with pain

—for on thy forehead, too, I can see a vague and indistinct remembrance of thy sins, and like a man half awake thou triest to raise thy head, as if thou wert saying with a feeble voice, “Who calleth me?”

And just above these poor wretches, see! that glorious beautiful form—all life, and youth, and bliss, as she rises up to meet her Saviour, and enter the golden gates of paradise. And, higher still in the skies, see those infants, surrounded by the rich gold clouds, like birds in their nests, reaching forth their little arms, and smiling to a father who is just coming from his tomb! On the left is hell—the hell of Dante, with his fearful mingling of Heathenism and Christianity! Charon and Satan! Charon in his boat, sailing over the Acheron; the boat is full of souls, and when he reaches the bank, he drives with his oar those which linger, before they plunge. Among them are three bishops, and also I know not what imbecile *monsignore*, who had one day written against a picture of Buonarotti. It was very convenient to hate in those days of superstition. As soon as a poet or a painter had an enemy, he made a hell and put his foe in the cauldron. Above hell are flying angels and devils. The angels carrying away the souls of the just to heaven; the devils seizing the wicked—the proud by the hair, the lascivious by the shameful parts; for the gospel declares men shall be punished by the very members with which they have sinned. They also try to draw after them men not yet judged, for Satan will steal from God!

And brooding over all this scene, is the dun thick air, the murky gloom, the terror of the final Judgment. These are some of the features of this immense work. Painters say it is an incomprehensible picture—inconceivable as a reproduction of human forms. All Michael Angelo's works are solemn, but this is not only pervaded by the gloomy grandeur of the master's genius, but shrouded in the terrific gloom of the dreadful day.

It was now towards the year 1546, and Buonarrotti was growing old—a vigorous old age, for his youth and manhood had been chaste and sober, but still it was old age. All his life he had been deeply pious, like most of the strong men of that solemn and earnest age. He read every day the Holy Scriptures in both Testaments, and continually the writings of the great Savonarola, whom he had heard preach in his youth, and whose terrible denunciations against the wicked, whose accents of love and tenderness to the penitent, had always lingered in his ears.

Age carried him still more towards God—age and another cause, too—*Love*. I have hesitated, says the elegant Legouv  , to trace this word, for it awakens in us Frenchmen, and men of the nineteenth century, ideas that would have made the old Buonarrotti blush so, that I would gladly have invented a term for this sentiment, which the Italians, since the age of Petrarch and Dante, have made the soul of their writings. Love, with them, was the love of Plato, the love of St.

Augustine, and the love of Lucrece—that is to say—for the universe, the law of order and harmony, which causes the stars to move one around another, which mingles the seeds of flowers and trees, reconciles the animals, attracts the sea to the shore, sends the dashing rivulet down the mountain side off to wander through the vale ; and for man the purest and most ethereal point of his nature ; which makes him rise to God, which makes him love all that is good, beautiful, unfortunate. This sentiment, so illimitable, so spiritual, is stifled in our narrow coarse word, *Love*. The Italians of genius have so refined this sentiment, that when they have given it an object, when they have shed it upon a woman, they would only see in it an ideal. Witness the Beatrice of Dante, of whom they have made *Theology*, and the Laura of Petrarch, whom they have made *Philosophy*. For me, I am convinced Beatrice and Laura were women ; but I know of nothing more noble for these great authors, than the error of posterity, to paint so exalted and pure a love, that readers take it for a virtue, or a science. Such a love is as far above the love of our times, as the deep adoration of a Glaucus is elevated above the filthy amours of a Don Juan. Such was the love of Michael Angelo—a flame to refine Art, wings to fly to God with. “It is the power of a fine face,” said he, “which spurs me towards heaven. In those eyes I find a luminous ray which guides me to my Creator.” Besides, the object of this love was the noblest of women. It was the

grave and beautiful Vittoria Colonna, Marchioness of Peschiera. Born of one of the proudest families of the middle ages, she was betrothed, when four years old, to Ferdinand Francis of Avalos, of the same age. At seventeen they were married. Vittoria gave herself to poetry, and shed lustre upon the Italian muse. The Marquis of Peschiera joined the army, and eclipsed the bravest chiefs who fought under the banners of Charles the Fifth. This fine young officer and his beautiful bride, so glorious, so good, so fond of each other, were the noblest couple in the world. But death never for a long time forgets the happy. The Marquis was wounded at the battle of Pavia. The petty Italian States, alarmed at the overshadowing empire of Charles the Fifth, offered the kingdom of Naples to Peschiera. "Do not accept," wrote the magnanimous wife; "remember your virtue, which raised you above Princes." He also had the magnanimity to refuse, even when he was supposed to have nearly recovered from his wounds; but this noble act was the last of his brilliant life. He died soon after, of his battle-wounds.

Vittoria, with a broken heart, retired to Naples—afterwards to Fichia, and finally to a convent in Viterbo; refusing, repeatedly, the hands of the greatest Princes of Italy. It was there she knew Buonarrotti. Michael Angelo was old; she was herself no longer young; but they conceived for each other a love of the most austere kind—love of art—love of virtue—love of genius—love of God! Michael

Angelo had always been a lover of poetry, and for many years the divine comedy of Dante had been his constant companion. No longer able to paint, he became poet, and sent to the noble Colonna sonnets and statues, and she answered him in the most exquisite stanzas. Wonderful correspondence! such as the world has never had. She often left her convent, and went to Rome to see Buonarotti, and used to pass some hours with him alone. What sentiments must have been exchanged between two such spirits! One day she did not come, and he heard she was near the point of death. With a sad heart, the poet left Rome, immediately, for the convent; but, alas! it was too late—she was no more! He went to the chapel where the body was reposing—kneeling by it, and took her hand in his, and softly and reverently kissed it. It was the first time he had ever kissed her! And he said he did not dare even then to kiss her forehead or her face. Reader, do you know a more beautiful picture, than of that silver-headed old man, called Michael Angelo, kneeling to kiss the hand of that dead woman, called Vittoria Colonna!

The austerity of life Michael Angelo observed, as long as he lived, was the more remarkable since there never was a man whose love of the beautiful was more enthusiastic and universal. It was a happiness for him to see a fine horse, a fine dog, a bold mountain, a beautiful forest,—anything that sprung from the eternal source of order and beauty. How

much more, then, the face of a beautiful woman moved him, with all his passionate love of form—like the old Greek poets and sculptors, like all who have enthusiasm and love for all that is beautiful. He gazed in admiration when he met with some young workman whose limbs and muscles were firmly and harmoniously set. In either case, it was for him, neither a man nor a woman—it was beauty.

Michael Angelo, as we have already said, felt himself too old to paint; he was about sixty-five, and he gave himself entirely to architecture. He constructed the Capitole and the ravishing church della Santa Maria degli Angeli. They came from all sides, to consult him for temples, and monuments, and palaces; he gave a sketch, and they executed it. Lastly, the child, the miracle of his old age, the work of his last seventeen years was the church of Saint Peter!

In the year 1559, Antonio di Sangallo, who had begun the church, being dead, Pius VI. resolved to confide the execution of it to Buonarrotti. At first he refused—as he had refused *the Creation* and *the Last Judgment*—saying he was a sculptor, and not an architect. The Pontiff commanded—Michael Angelo was again obliged to create a master-piece. He went to the church to see the model Sangallo had made. All the friends and scholars of the architect were waiting for him, and some of the bystanders began to tell him, with ironical smiles, that it was an easy matter to complete a plan when

he found it ready made—"it is a meadow where you will feed well no doubt." "Good grazing, indeed, for brutes! eat away," was his sole reply. He carefully examined the work, and studied every portion of the design, and then he declared the plan absurd—that he would build the church on a model a thousand times finer, with three hundred thousand crowns less, and in a shorter period by fifty years! that in fact this stupid plan could never be finished, and was only the pretext of a dishonest man to obtain a living for himself and followers, at the expense of the Pope; and that from the day the Pontiff should name him his architect, he would turn away every one of the workmen who had been employed there before. To begin the reformation by a noble example in himself, he declared he would not receive any payment for his work, and required this clause to be inserted in the Pope's ordinance.

"In this world," says an old proverb, "a man is not honest with impunity," and Michael Angelo cruelly atoned for his excess of delicacy and candor. St. Peter's became the torture, rather than the delight, of his last days! No sooner was a new Pope made—and they made and unmade them often in those days—than the enemies of the great architect began to plot his ruin. They refused him money to go on—they gave him the worst workmen in Rome—the Pope was told a thousand scandalous things, among others, that the chapels were too small, that the light was badly distributed, &c.

Shaken by these calumnies, the Pope sent for Buonarrotti, and told him all. "I should like to *hear* those men say this," replied the old architect. "it is I," said the Cardinal Marcellus, who was present, "who have said this." "Let me tell you, then, Monsignore," was his indignant reply, "that you are meddling in matters which you know nothing about. That dome will endure. As for the windows, there will be three others in the dome."

"You never told us that," answered the Cardinal. "Monsignore," then exclaimed the proud Buonarrotti, "I am not obliged, nor will I be compelled to tell you, nor any other man, what I shall do. Your business is to procure money, and keep thieves from stealing it. As to the church, that is my business." Then turning to the Pope—"Holy Father," said he, "you see what I gain in working for you; and if the pain I suffer were not to be followed by the favor of God, what could I look for, while I am doing His will!" The Pontiff could not but feel the power of Michael Angelo's words—he could not but love him, and venerate his genius and his lofty piety. He laid his hands on his shoulders, and said, "You work for time, and for eternity—do not doubt it."

So many annoyances and mortifications embittered the last days of Buonarrotti, and he became as solemn as the grave. There was not one of his thoughts on which the word death was not written; the most profound gloom settled upon his heart, and old age

spreading its thick veil over him, he no more raised his head but to speak of God and poetry. Vasari, who was at Florence, having written him that his nephew had had a son born, and that thus the name of Buonarotti would not die, he replied, "My dear Vasari, it gives me great pleasure to see that you still remember the old man, and that you have kissed the little child in whom revives the name of Buonarotti, as you say; but the pomp and feasting which took place at his baptism displeased me. Man ought never to laugh, since the world always weeps. And it seems to me my nephew Leonardi, instead of welcoming a new-born child, should reserve his rejoicing for the day, when dies a man who has lived well."

The death of one of his servants who had been with him since 1530, was a final stroke. Old as was Michael Angelo, Urbino had been served by him in all his illness—he had passed all his nights at his bedside. Alluding to it in writing to Vasari, he says: "I can scarcely write, my dear G——. I will however do it for you. You know how this poor Urbino died. It has been a very great pain to me, but a great lesson too, for he has taught me how to die. He had been in my house twenty-six years. I have always found him a friend, and now that I had made him rich, and hoped to have in him a prop for my old age to lean on, he is taken from me, and I have no other hope than to see him in heaven. In dying, he suffered less than the

thought of leaving me, in this treacherous world, with so many misfortunes : for, to say the truth, the better part of myself departed with him, and there only remains for me great suffering, and I recommend myself to you."

Often in deep despair, being no longer able to stay in Rome, he would fly with a servant to the mountains of Spoleto, and remain alone for several days, visiting the most solitary places, and communing with the old monks. "I have been passing," says he, "half a month with great satisfaction, in the environs of Rome, surveying hermitages ; and I have only brought to town half of myself, for the other part lives in the wild fields and green woods." But he never stayed long in the country. In a few days he came back to St. Peter's to resume his work, for he knew but too well he had little time left.

He was continually receiving applications from the Grand Duke of Tuscany, to go back to Florence. His annoyances and sufferings in Rome were not unknown to the Grand Duke, who promised him the erection and control of all the monuments of the town. He used to write to him through Vasari, and frequently he wrote with his own hand. Michael Angelo replied—"I take God for my witness, that it was against my wish, and almost by force, that Pope Paul the Third charged me with St. Peter's more than ten years ago, and had I known all the sorrow it would have brought on my old age,

I should have refused the load; but as to-day the greater difficulties are surmounted, to abandon my work half done, would be to lose with shame the price of the fatigues I have suffered for the love of God, and ruin this enterprise for ever. You well know how consoling it would be for me to go and repose my old bones near those of my fathers; but I cannot, and moreover I am too old—in my eighty-second year—to think of new things;—I must remain quiet, and only think of God and of dying. I shall not be able to work for our illustrious Grand Duke, for another reason. I am now only fit for making verses! You will think I am mad to write sonnets, at my age, since they say, too, I am fallen into my second childhood; then, if it be so, let me act like a child.”

Poor Michael Angelo! to be ashamed of his sonnets—like Pascal, in later times, after overrunning the circle of human knowledge—thus old Buonarotti, after reaching the boundaries of the world of art, throws away the pencil and chisel, to sit down silently before the doors of eternity, waiting reverently for them to be opened and God appear. God did appear; and on the 17th of February, 1563, the great man died.

Michael Angelo was a man of more than ordinary stature, large shoulders, well-proportioned form, bony, square and nervous. Though in infancy he was sickly and feeble, his manhood was vigorous. But old age brought him the most painful of all in-

firmities, *the stone*. His face was florid, his forehead high and spacious, his nose a little irregular, his lips thin,—the upper one a little projecting,—few eyelashes, eyes small and grey, but full of fire and slightly tinged with blue and yellow. His hair was black—also his beard, which was five or six inches long, not very thick, and divided under his chin. In his old age he continually wore on his naked feet shoes of dog-skin, which he left on for months together; and when he took them off, his own skin came off with them. The life of this man was always hard and austere, like that of a monk; for he only lived for art, and art was for him a priesthood. He did not love luxury, and though really rich, he lived like a poor man. He was very grave, and never ate nor drank for pleasure. When he worked he contented himself with a piece of bread and some drops of wine; slept only three or four hours a day, often without undressing, to avoid trouble and loss of time. In the night, when a happy thought came in his dreams, it always woke him; and leaving his bed, he transferred his conceptions to a sheet of paper, which he kept always ready with the light falling upon it in the right direction. Very often he worked all night—and, indeed, whole days and nights in succession.

Vasari, observing he used tallow candles, which gave but a poor light, sent him forty pounds of wax candles. The servant who bore them, came at a convenient hour for the desired effect—late in the

evening. But Michael Angelo had a principle never to receive a present from any one; "for," said he, "the giver can never be repaid," and so he refused the wax candles, although they were from a friend. "Sir," answered the servant, "my arms are nearly broken carrying these wax candles so far, already; I will not take them back. You have before your door a heap of mud. I am going to stick them all in there and light them." "Well, stick them there, if you like, you obstinate fellow," said the sculptor, with one of those few smiles that lit up his sad face, "I have no objection to your illuminating the street, but you shall not illuminate me."

While a boy he was already Michael Angelo. His youth was solitary and laborious; he would see no one—shut himself up with his marbles, and thought, and read, and designed, and worked alone—always alone. Men of talent want the contact of other men to renew themselves; but men of genius carry their own fire about with them—wherever they are, there is their world, there their inspiration.

The toils of his study were inconceivable. Vasari tells us, that he saw his cartoons after his death, and that by comparing them, he found what immense toil his final designs had cost him; for he could trace them from the first conception up to the matchless perfection he was always so sure to bring them to at last. But the great man admitted no one to the confidence of his great works.

Vasari in another place relates, that he once went

to see his beloved Buonarrotti in the name of the Pontiff, one night, at one o'clock. He found the sculptor working at a statue of Piety. Michael Angelo heard the knock of his friend, and taking a lantern, went to open the door to him. Vasari entered, and made him acquainted with the object of his visit. During the conversation, he cast a glance upon a leg of the statue. Michael Angelo saw it, and let the lantern fall, and availing himself of the darkness, he took his friend out of his studio, listening in the meantime to the rest of his conversation. And then, to make it all appear less rude, he said, "I am so old, that from time to time I feel death pulling me by the cape of my cloak to go with him; and one of these days, my life will fall, and extinguish itself like that lantern." When they reached the threshold of the house, he dismissed his visitor!

Of too powerful and penetrating a genius to stop at the surface of things, he went to the bottom of all the sciences he began. He knew anatomy like an experienced surgeon, and was the best mason, as well as the greatest architect, of his age. Besides, like Shakspeare, who had only read Plutarch and some Italian romances (so they say), Michael Angelo had learned nothing in the works of others,—he studied but one master, and that was God. In art, he saw but a single object worthy of being reproduced, and that was the human form; and in man, only two things—muscles and passions—the body and the soul of sculpture. Costumes, landscapes, grounds,

perspective, were nothing to him ; hence nearly all his persons are naked, and even his paintings seem sculptured. We have already said he felt little enthusiasm for painting ; we might add, *in himself*, for he loved and appreciated the great painters of his time. Vasari tells us of many little things about Michael Angelo's generous love and admiration of his fellow-artists, particularly of Raphael. But sculpture was his art ; in it his soul lived, and moved, and had its being ; there he felt at home, for he knew his magical power, which called forth from the cold lifeless marble, breathing forms. He had a saying, full of grace and beauty, of this sublimest of all the great arts : " A statue," said he, " is in a block of marble, as a woman is in a bath—we must take away all that envelopes and encumbers the body, and the beautiful figure stands free."

Michael Angelo was modest—not in regard to other men. I do not believe in that modesty, for such a man. It is not possible that a Shakspeare, a Dante, a Molière, should feel on the same footing with the people about them. But his great triumphs in art did not make him proud or vain, for he measured the immense interval between what he did, and what he dreamed. His vision shot its keen glance beyond all the creations of genius, in all nations, and all times. He saw what few, if any, of earth's children have ever seen, and his soul was equal to the loftiest execution of it all ; but " the dreadful laws," as MacIntosh called them, of matter,

and inertia, and feebleness, chained his wing, and he felt humble, when he thought of nature and of God. This is the modesty, this the despair, of great geniuses. While we are kneeling before their works, and find them shining and splendid, in their eyes they are tarnished with blemishes and imperfections. For to the man of genius there is the same difference between the idea and the execution, there is between the spiritual visions of the soul in the dream-land, and the hard, harsh certainties of the working-day life—between, as once said the golden-souled Raphael, “the focus and the reflected light.”

Well, Michael Angelo was always the sad and weary victim of his own spiritual dreamings. Like the wild, ideal-haunted poet's hero, who, in his uncontrolled passion for love and perfect beauty, running desperately through the world, to find the being of his dreams, this Michael Angelo, haunted day and night by images of perfection, pursues the phantom, out of breath, and thinks he sees it in every block of marble. “It's here—it's here,” and he carries away the marble, shuts himself up with it, and cuts it,—at every stroke of the chisel fancying the celestial form comes out, and when, after days and nights of hard labor and feverish hope, he returns to his sanctuary, after a little repose, looks at the work, and then sits down to weep, exclaiming —“It is *not* here.”

It has been thought by some of the learned and elegant critics of our times, that in this way only,

can we account for the great number of works Michael Angelo suddenly abandoned before half completed.

“His ardor in beginning new works,” says M. Legoure, “and the disgust he often conceived for them when partly executed, were peculiar to himself. Having commenced a fine statue of Christ, and nearly finished it, he discovered some defect in his work, and a stain in the marble; he gave it a blow with his hammer, and shivered it to pieces.” But this is to us only, at best, an ingenious way of accounting for a fact which I think may be more satisfactorily explained in another manner.* Besides, it poorly harmonizes with the exalted views the world cherish of the loftiness, and the completeness of Michael Angelo’s profound genius. Fickleness and caprice had little to do with his character.

Rude, frank, gloomy, and of simple austere habits, he has been accused of avarice! It is well—when we have no defects, others must manufacture some for us out of our good qualities—curious, too, such blind detractors should always stumble upon the choicest points of the character to pervert. Buonarotti avaricious! who gave his friends master-pieces that would have made him opulent—who cut the colossal statue of David for half the cost of the marble—

* The most satisfactory and convincing solution we have ever met with of this characteristic of Buonarotti, will be found in the *Conversations with Mr. Powers*, recorded in this work, Vol. i., p. 145.

who would refuse all stipend for the last seventeen years of his life, devoted to the service of God, in the building of the wonderful St. Peter's—he who distributed regularly the fourth of his income among the unfortunate—who gave settlements and formed respectable marriages for more than ten poor maidens—he who, asking his servant “What would you do if I should die?” receiving an answer, “Serve another master from necessity,” gave him immediately two thousand crowns, a present worthy of an emperor!—No; he was not avaricious; but he was as simple as he was chaste, for the body was nothing to him.

It is said, a dishonest or low word never fell from his austere mouth; and when he spoke, his words were so full of virtue and high sentiment, they had power to smother all shameful passions in the hearts of the youth who listened to him. Michael Angelo could not help being sarcastic, although he was no detractor of real merit; a single proof of this is found in his noble tribute to the genius of Ghiberti, who had made the brazen doors of the Baptistery at Florence: “They are worthy of being the gates of Paradise.” One day a painter came to him to show him a picture, in which there was not a part he had not copied from the works of others. “It is all well done,” said Buonarotti, “but I do not know what will become of your picture at the Day of Judgment, when all the members re-join their bodies; for here is a head which belonged to the David of

Cimabue—there a leg you have taken from Giotto—an arm you borrowed from — what will remain for you?" Another time a sculptor went to his house with his child, and a statue of him he had just made, to ask Michael Angelo's opinion of his work. Old Buonarotti looked at the statue, and then turning to the blooming, beautiful boy, he caressed him on the cheek and said, "my little friend, you have a father who makes much better figures in flesh than in marble."

His genius, his eccentricity, his lively and cutting repartee, made him sought for by all the most illustrious men of his times. All the Pontiffs and Cardinals, and barons of Rome, were proud of his visits and his friendship. All the princes of Italy, Francis I., the Grand Council of Venice, and even the Grand Turk disputed for the honor of his presence at their Courts and Capitals, to illustrate their reigns. The Grand Duke always called him his friend. He lived familiarly with four Pontiffs; and in his enthusiasm for the great man, Julius II. used to say, "I would draw from my blood, and I would lose years to give them to Michael Angelo, to preserve so great a man to the world." Such friends and companions never made Buonarotti proud; and he always remained the friend, if not always the companion of contemporary artists.

But I am only writing passages from the life of Michael Angelo, and I will close these brief words by a short account of his funeral.

He had manifested his desire to be buried in Florence ; for Florence was his country, and he had exiled himself from it so long, only because the air was mortal to him. His nephew, Leonardi Buonarrotti, went to Rome and wrapped up the body in a bale of merchandise, and secretly bore it away.

This strange coffin reached Florence the eleventh of March, on Saturday, and the body was placed in the Chapel of the Assumption, under the high altar ; and as no preparation had been made for the funeral, they carefully concealed the arrival of the invaluable spoils. The following day being the second Sunday in Lent, all the painters, and sculptors, and architects mysteriously assembled at the church, where the precious dust was deposited ; and at midnight, all ranged round the body, they suddenly lighted a great number of torches,—the young men present disputed for the honor of being the pall-bearers of the greatest artist Italy had ever produced. The assembly, the hour, the torches, the noise, gathered the curious around the church ; and notwithstanding the mystery they wished should surround the procession, the news spread from mouth to mouth that the body of the great sculptor had arrived—it had been brought to that obscure church only for safety, and that it was now to be borne to the Santa Croce. The whole town was aroused and thousands rushed to the church, which was so thronged, it was with difficulty the procession could enter. After the ordinary religious ceremony, they placed it in the vestry,

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and the director of the procession exposed the face of the dead. Every one expected to find the body decomposed, for it had been deprived of life twenty-five days, and twenty-two it had been in the coffin.

But the body was entire in all its parts ; no change had passed over it ; it seemed only steeped in the soft, deep slumber of night's repose. It was then brought out and exposed in the church. All Florence flocked to see once more the divine face of their great Patriarch. And the body and the coffin were soon covered with sonnets in the vulgar, and in the Latin tongue.

A meeting was then held to order the funeral honors they were so ready to bestow. Four commissioners were appointed to make the preparations. They were Agnolo Bronzino, Vasari, Benvenuto Cellini and Ammannati. The fourteenth of July, in the centre of the gorgeous Church of St. Lorenzo, a platform was erected twenty-eight cubits high, eleven long, eighty-nine wide. Surmounting all, was Fame. The base was twelve cubits high, with four fronts, like the monument itself. Two of them faced two lateral doors, one of which conducted to the cloister, and the other to the street ; the third front faced the entrance door, and the fourth the high altar. On the side fronting the main door, were represented two beautiful rivers—the Arno and the Tiber ; the Arno with a horn of plenty, filled with fruits and flowers ; the Tiber, spreading out its arms, took part of the rich fruits and flowers which signified that Rome had

been enriched by the genius of Michael Angelo. On the base rose a block of marble five and a half cubits high, surrounded by cornices on all sides. On each of the four fronts, was sculptured a beautiful scene. Above the two rivers, Lorenzo de' Medici was leading the youthful Buonarrotti through his garden of statues. On the second, Pope Clement was commanding the Library of S. Lorenzo. On the side facing the high altar, was a Latin inscription by the learned Vetiori. This epitaph was supported by two little angels, weeping. The fourth side represented Michael Angelo, during the siege of Florence, directing the fortifications on the heights of San Miniato. These works were all from the hands of the masters of the time, and executed with great beauty. Moreover, this immense block, on which these scenes were sculptured, had, at each of the four corners, on advanced pedestals a statue, larger than life, trampling upon another of the same size, representing some idea befitting the occasion—one was Genius in the form of a young man full of fire, clothed with wings, holding Ignorance under his feet—another, Piety crushing Vice—another still, Minerva (as Art) with Envy under her feet; while the fourth represented Study, holding Indolence prisoner. Above this range rose another cornice, which formed a third square block, on whose sides other appropriate scenes were drawn. The first represented Michael Angelo before the Pontiff Pius, holding a model of the dome of St. Peter's in his

hand ; in the second, he is painting the Last Judgment ; in the third, Sculpture, in a female form, is communing with him ; in the fourth, Buonarotti is writing his Italian sonnets. At the four corners stood four statues, representing Sculpture, Poetry, Architecture, and Painting. Above rose a pyramid, nine cubits high, with a bust of Michael Angelo in *relievo* on one side, surmounted on the top by an urn, supposed to contain his ashes ; while high above all, towered a figure of Fame, blowing three trumpets.

The whole church, not excepting the smallest chapel, was hung in black ; and there was not a spot on these mourning hangings that was not decorated by a picture or an inscription. There were pictures and figures of Fame, of Hatred, trees thrown down by the storm, images of death, eternity ; and Sculpture, with Painting, and Poetry, as three sisters, by the side of Michael Angelo. On the pulpit above, no picture was seen, for it was a bronze work of Donatello. Thus gorgeously enriched, flooded with light, crowded by a generous people, the magistrates, academicians, the consuls, the painters, architects, and sculptors of Florence, who sat at their head, between the high altar and the funeral pile ; the church presented a spectacle of great and gorgeous solemnity. The solemn mass began with all the ceremonies of sacred music and ecclesiastical pomp. When it was done, the illustrious Varchi ascended the pulpit, and pronounced a funeral ora-

tion. The whole ended by carrying the sacred ashes of the dead to the tomb, where they still repose after a quiet slumber of three hundred years. When one reads an account of these signal and touching honors, paid to Michael Angelo, he feels he can almost forgive Florence for her cruelty to Dante !

I intended to speak of Buonarotti's poetry, but I will only transcribe his beautiful sonnet upon Dante. The Poet will explain the Sculptor.

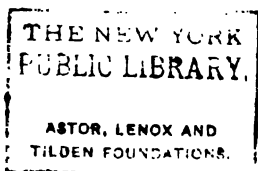
D A N T E .

DAL mondo scese ai ciechi abissi, e poi
Che l'uno e l'altro inferno vide a Dio
Scorto dal gran pensier viro salio,
E ne diè in terra vero lume a noi.

Stella d' alto valor co'raggi suoi
Gli occulti eterni a noi ciechi scoprio
E n' ebbe il premio alfin che il mondo rio
Dona sovente a più pregiati eroi.

Di Dante mal fur l'opre conosciute
E'l bel desio da quel popolo ingrato
Che solo a giusti manca di saluti.

Pur fossi io tal ! ch' a simil sorte nato
Per l'aspro esiglio suo con sua virtute
Darei del mondo il più felice stato.



paradise vale of the Arno lay sleeping in the mellow sunlight, and Florence lay sleeping in the vale, like a quiet lake in the bosom of the mountains. Far up the east, the yellow Arno came flowing down from the hills, and far to the west it went winding away through the vale, in its gentle pilgrimage to the sea. Just north of the city rose the old grey hill of Fiesoli, with its ancient convent and solemn cypresses, guarding Florence on the north-east, as the Tower-hill did on the south-east. Behind it rose the bald Appenines, with their huge backs, and spindle icy peaks, where the dazzling sunbeams were playing—on the west, the green valley opened on the sea, and above the blue Mediterranean, the dusky form of Mt. Gargano (80 miles) came up out of the waves. Two miles west of us, we saw the shattered walls of San Miniato. When the last siege of Florence came on, and the last effort was made for the rescue of its liberties, Michael Angelo left his studio, to conduct the fortifications of the city, and defend its walls from a foreign foe. He posted himself on the towers of the convent of San Miniato, and defended it against the artillery of the enemy till all hope was gone.

The day that saw the fall of the Republic of Florence, was the darkest in Italian story. "The patriot-death of Niccolò Capponi—Michael Angelo hastening from his great work to shut himself up in the city of his birth, in the hour of her greatest need, pouring his glorious earnings into her public coffers, and raising walls for her defence with those hands

which had painted the Divinity on the walls of the Vatican, and chiselled the immortal Moses, the wonder and admiration of posterity—Savonarola, purchasing his certain martyrdom in the dungeons of Rome, by preaching resistance to the Holy Crusade, and stirring up a love of ancient liberty—three thousand of the Florentine youth of the highest rank, and self-armed, marching solemnly to the altars, and pledging themselves, on the Holy Scriptures, to defend the liberties of Florence to the last drop of their blood—two thousand of the elders, from the age of forty to fifty-five, armed, like their sons, and taking the same holy engagements, in the presence of their wives and children—the most luxurious of the aristocracy, consenting to the destruction of their villas and galleries without the walls, for the protection of the city—the most tragic sacrifices made, of kindred and friends, whom the people demanded, as victims for having notoriously betrayed their country as spies and emissaries of the Pope or the Emperor—the brave sorties against the formidable foe, and wild attacks upon the Spanish and German troops, in their own camp; all these traits of patriotism and public spirit, could not save the devoted city, where liberty clung to her last altar. Florence fell; but in her last agony, with pestilence within her walls, and the ferocious enemy at her gates, and want and exhaustion thinning her armed ranks, the people still demanded to be led to battle, and to die upon the ramparts. Famine effected what a superior force

could not achieve. The Florentines capitulated, but even in the moment of laying down their arms, they stipulated for their liberties, and proposed a definite Constitution to the conqueror. The Emperor gave them a despotic Prince, and that Prince a Medici. Italy fell with Florence. From that period, broken down, parcelled out, she beheld the greatest part of her dominions under the unlimited power of Spain and Austria." Such was the graphic picture of the historian, recalled to my mind, while I looked off upon the towers of San Miniato. And there, on the bosom of the vale, was Florence. How my heart leaped, while I gazed on this stronghold of Freedom! Around those old walls, how many hostile squadrons had met in the shock of battle,—how many empires and crowns had been lost and won—how much had been achieved for man, before the Roman eagles ever flew over the mountains of Etruria! Here Science, and Letters, and the Arts, had found a retreat in the rough shocks of the middle ages. Before me lay the scene, where more great events had been enacted than on any other spot in the Peninsula. Here began the revival of Letters. Here Boccaccio formed his beautiful language—here Petrarch sung his inimitable verses, and here stood Dante, when those wonderful visions swept across his soul. At our feet were the gardens of Lorenzo de' Medici, where Michael Angelo made his fame, and where artists dreamed their ideals. In these gardens, the Arts lived in the light of the Muses, while

Liberty kept her everlasting vigils on the ramparts, and every man in Florence could say,—

“ Auch’ io sono cittadino Florentino,
E quai a chi me toche.”

To this tower, built during the middle ages, Galileo came, and spent the long nights of his exile from his native city, and here he traced the Satellites of Jupiter. There is a chain that links strangely together the few men in whom the hopes of the world are treasured up. Galileo was born the day Michael Angelo died, and died the day Newton was born. God seems to have placed him between these two men, as He set up the rock of Gibraltar between two seas. The waves of two ages beat against him. He “continues that dynasty of great men, which had commenced in Dante. He is to the sciences of the moderns, what Dante is to their poetry.” Such are the words of Quinet, who has written the most extraordinary book of our times. You must get his “Roman Church, in Modern Society.” He is not bigoted, but he dare tell the truth, even in Europe. He has said some things about Galileo, which ought to be engraven on a Sybil’s Scroll, and be put into the archives of the gods. Hear how he talks about Galileo :

“ At the time we have now reached, the Inquisition has stifled every appearance of movement in the South. The executioner has torn out the tongue of Vanini—Giordano, Bruno, Domini, have been burnt

at the stake. To Italy—obliged to renounce all theories, ideas, systems, what remains? You answer, experience, facts, whatever there is invincible in man's nature: mathematics. Well, experience, mathematics, are about to be interdicted, physics rebuked, geometry excommunicated, that it may be clearly demonstrated, that if Italy stops short, if she gives up producing, it is because all the issues are closed to her, and life itself in her condemned.

At the same time, Providence is about to make use of a great man, to spread for the Papacy a most extraordinary snare: the Roman infallibility will find itself compromised by something more infallible: the whole world will see the first come in collision with the thought of God.

Think not that chance alone conducts him in his discoveries. His fundamental maxim, that one cannot teach another person the truth, that one can only help him find it in himself, which is the foundation of his method, is in itself a whole philosophy—it would suffice to place an abyss between him and the purely sensualist schools. Galileo belongs to the most liberal schools of the Pythagorean antiquity—there was not in the New Thinkers, the Cisalpines, the Sarpis, any bold idea that he had not embraced. From these heights of philosophy, as from the Tower of Pisa, he obtained a command of experience and facts. But the moral world being forbidden him, he was reduced to aggrandizing the physical world. Bacon has often been compared to

Galileo ; I find nothing but differences between the two men. The one shows very ingeniously the way that must be taken to arrive at truth—he lays down wonderful theories for discovering the unknown, but he cannot lay hold of it. With Galileo we have no lessons, and much reality. With him all is life, discovery, creation. He does not say *how* we must find : he finds. Bacon is like one who makes a good art of poetry—Galileo makes a good poem. Galileo treats science as Raphael treats art. He acts ; he enlarges the universe ; he creates—he does not theorize. He enters this region of discoveries with a serenity, an internal harmony, no one before him had known ; his discoveries themselves do not seem to move him. He gives himself up to the search for truth, with the ingenuousness, the security of Columbus setting out for the New World, which he already possesses in himself. He handles the universe in all directions, as though he were acquainted with it beforehand.

In the Cathedral of Pisa, in the midst of ascetic prayers, his glance is arrested by a lamp which has been set in motion ; its movement reveals to him the law of the isochronism of the pendulum. On hearing of this, Kepler, from the depth of Germany, cries out to him, "Be confident, Galileo, and go on." Galileo replies by his labors, which he himself calls gigantic—the discoveries of the law of heavy bodies, of the science of dynamics, of hydrostatics, of the making of the telescope, of the constitution of the

milky way, of the rotatory movement of the sun, of the generation of comets, of the four satellites of Jupiter, of the use of their laws in the calculation of longitudes.

With the magnificence of a sovereign he announces and gives to the Rulers of State, the King of Spain, the Republic of Holland, such of his discoveries as are most capable of being immediately put in practice. He performs the office of the priest; he reveals the immutable laws; he teaches the wisdom of God in his works. His friends in Venice write, that in his triumphal march from revelation to revelation, he is, as it were, the monarch of the Universe. I content myself with saying, he is its high-priest. See how this priesthood is recognized by the Church! About the year 1536, a Pole, after a long residence in Italy, returns to his own country. There he composes, in a very vigorous spirit, a work on astronomy, in which he supposes that the earth, and not the sun moves in space. He dedicates the work to Pope Paul III.; he dies before the book is published; a profound silence rests for some time upon his memory.

The Book penetrates into Italy; is laughed at. Galileo himself yet young, though struck, converted, dares not avow it; he does not yet feel himself strong enough against ridicule. By degrees, however, he grows bolder, in proportion as his conviction becomes irresistible. It needed a sort of heroism to proclaim it. Galileo becomes at length the apostle

of the new doctrine ; he confirms, he publishes it. Such a hold do truths take, that almost all the men who looked towards the future, range themselves on the side of this doctrine. Sarpi, Campanella, Grotius, Gassendi adopt it, so to speak, spontaneously ; all the men who looked to the past repel it. The most ardent to cause its rejection, are the Jesuits. Their orator, their teacher of the law, the great Bellarmine, is the first to give the alarm ; he causes to be convoked an assembly of the Inquisition, which, in its first council, forbids to discuss, or to expose the hypothesis of Copernicus. He had given up, also, as suspicious, the discovery of the four satellites, and that instrument of magic, the telescope, which threatened to overthrow the heavens.

What had happened since Paul III. accepted the dedication of Copernicus ? The Reformation had grown big without, and alarm within the Church. Henceforth every novelty, every discovery becomes a peril ; the least sound in the universe, a rising star, a passing meteor, life itself is the cause of terror. In fact, Galileo gave this system a force which was menacing everything that was growing old. It was a revolution upon the earth as well as in the heavens.

Constrained by the spirit of truth, incapable of keeping silence, in spite of the Inquisition, Galileo composes a series of Dialogues, in which the new system is, on the one side, defended with irresistible art, and on the other, awkwardly attacked by one

of the interlocutors, Simplicius. They had the malice to tell the Pope, Urban VIII., that this Simplicius, a very narrow mind in reality, was no other person than his Holiness himself. There was no need of this artifice to envenom everything; the things themselves spoke loud enough.

Galileo threw aside the repulsive language of scholasticism, and in his familiar, charming speech, which reached the masses for whom he felt, the very heavens seemed to bow themselves. The common mind moved on, in his dialogues, from sphere to sphere without fatigue. No man before him had taught silence to the many; the many were to have light, and the man who was flashing it among them must be chained up in the dark!

When Galileo rejected with so much pride the authority of tradition, and relying on his own convictions and strength, looked, and thought, and decided for himself, an element of danger appeared. It was impossible not to think of the liberty Protestantism claimed for the mind of each individual. Galileo had the spirit of the Republic of Pisa about him. Despotism now reigned in Florence; the Church had stabbed her liberty, dug its grave, and over its warm ashes set up the tyrant's throne. The Church, too, kept her Argus-vigils round the new throne. It was a dangerous place for a man who believed the world went round the sun.

The heavens of the middle ages were dim, distant, mysterious regions, *beyond* which there was

nothing. A curtain covered them. Galileo tore away the curtain, and made systems of scattered planets, and set them rolling through space. All the Catholicism of the middle ages had represented the earth as a condemned world, formed for chastisement and for evil—It was the vale where all the tears of worlds flowed—the impure sink of the universe. Here, by the overthrow of the old theology, Galileo releases nature from this condemnation. He restores to the earth its original dignity; he establishes equality between the heavens and the earth; he shows that the latter is subjected to the same laws, and floats in the same splendor as the former; he puts serenity and life in the place of mystical theory; to use his own words, he replaces the earth in the heavens, whence they had banished it.

A question is now springing up into consequence. On one side, is the book of the ecclesiastical canons and decrees of the Holy See; on the other, the book of the Universe, and the Eternal Laws of Geometry. Which shall yield? Shall the entire Universe, with its inexorable Geometry, recoil before formulas, the decrees, the traditions of the Church? Behold the problem, which now for the first time places itself clearly before the world! It is the divorce of the Church and Science! The Church made the issue, and chose her own course. She followed her own traditions—she put her interdict upon the thought which rules the universe.

The sworn enemies of every serious invention

were to have the honor of inflicting the first blows upon Galileo. The war is long, desperate! Good men and good Catholics are with him. It was a question of science: the Jesuits determined it should be made a question of religion. At last, Galileo is abandoned to the Holy Universal Roman Inquisition.

See him! this man covered with glory, the good old man of seventy years, *questo buon vecchio* as the people called him, on his knees before you, bare-footed, and stripped to his shirt! You who are now the friends of all liberty, tell us what you have done at that moment with the man who represented all liberty! For there is a moment when history leaves him and he remains wholly in your hands! Have you put him to the torture? You alone know. You declare that you have put him to the *rigorous examination*. "And in the infernal Code of the Inquisition, which I have just been studying," are the exact words of Quinet, "this phrase is everywhere the synonyme of torture. And has not this expression, 'nevertheless it moves,' *eppure si muove*, escaped from him in the midst of this punishment of the cord, the wooden horse, or the iron buskin? You alone can answer."

But the greatest torment you could inflict upon such a man, a mortal torture was the prohibition to teach anything, to publish anything: a general prohibition against all that he has done, or may do—an absolute silence commanded for the rest of his life. Shut up for ever in a part of the country remote from

cities, in his gaol of Arcetri, you forbade him all intercourse with men, where, his eyes having been accustomed to look at the sun, he becomes blind, as Beethoven becomes deaf, when the world, whose bounds he had enlarged, is reduced for him to the narrow measure of his own body ; and when, in this desolate situation, he loves his dear daughter, the nun Maria Celeste, who read to him the penitential psalms, which you imposed upon him as a chastisement for his genius : so many sufferings do not disarm you ! You send the Inquisitor of Florence, to find out if Galileo is cast down—if Galileo is sad ! You fear lest his immortal spirit should rejoice in the contemplation of the spheres.

Even his observations, his astronomical calculations, are carried away, and dispersed. The most faithful of friends buries some of his MSS. underground, to be discovered one day. On this occasion, the Venetian Micanzio utters that fine sentiment—*“ No ! all hell could not destroy things like them.”*

Burn, scatter, destroy his MSS., and then ask if Galileo is sad ? Content yourselves ! You have succeeded in reducing to despair a spirit the most severe, the strongest, the calmest that ever lived. ‘ An immense sadness and melancholy overwhelms me,’ he answers you. Such is your treatment of a man, to whom it was given to read the eternal counsels of the God of worlds.

Thus talks Quinet—a man who is stamping his spirit upon his age : one of those new French writ-

ers who are regenerating France—who are making her what she always would have been, had not the mill-stone of civil and religious despotism been hung to her neck.

We sat down on the old ivy-grown tower, and talked about the good old prisoner, till the sun was high over the Arno. We plucked some green ivy leaves, and made a crown, and at the base of the tower we found some rose-buds, and we wove them in the chaplet, and we went down the hill to his house.

Here we saw the deep well he cut, 160 feet through the solid rock, and drank its waters, and we wandered over the rooms, and uncovered ourselves in the apartment where it is said he died, and then, we came away.

“The Inquisitors,” said Albéri, as we walked away, “thought they had silenced for ever the voice of poor Galileo, and that he could not speak to posterity. Yes, they exulted in the thought, that his MSS. were destroyed! For long ages the world supposed they were, and the brave had cursed that Inquisition, and the good had wept over the priceless treasures for two hundred years! At last, God, who had watched them with the same sleepless eye He watched His own revelations in the early ages, brought them forth, and we are now printing them, under the direction of our own munificent and enlightened Prince, and soon the world shall have them.” I shall tell you about them in a P. S., if I have time, or perhaps in a letter, for the subject is

worthy of a volume. But I must trouble you no more now. When we entered the beautiful city, we visited the temple of Galileo. I will speak about it, with the lost manuscripts of Galileo, and the meetings of the Italian Savans, in my next.

Your true —.

LETTER VI.

Florence, — 1845.

DEAR —,

A WORD about the lost manuscripts of Galileo, just come to light, since their discovery seems to be the strangest curiosity in the literature of the nineteenth century.

Galileo died in the year 1642. The night of the seventh of January, 1610, was a memorable one in the history of science. The year before, he had invented the telescope—he had now brought it to comparative perfection, and everything was arranged for an observation upon Jupiter. The day dragged itself slowly away, and night came lazily on ; while the impatient Galileo waited anxiously from his lonely tower, for the stars to come out. Away in the far deep heaven shone Jupiter, clear on the sky. The telescope was swung to its orbit, and brought to bear upon that great planet, while Galileo gazed tremblingly, hoping, fearing, through its mysterious lenses. But fear not, Prophet ! God is in communion with thee, thou man of worlds. Suddenly there comes beaming the far light of a bright little star, nine hundred millions of miles distant, pursuing its quiet track

around Jupiter. Who can tell what he will say or do? See him in the strong feeling of veneration and gratitude, fall to his knees and pour out his tears as he looks away above all the stars, to the throne of his Maker. Before those tears are dried, he dashes them away and looks again. I see his intense gaze, the struggle of hope and fear; for an hour he looks in vain, but sees only that little star. At last a light flashes over his face, and I hear him exclaim, "O Dio! vedo un' altra"—and another star is gazed on for the first time, by a mortal man. He watches and waits till another comes—and, last of all, the fourth; and so he watches on, that bright night, till the saffron tints begin to color the eastern sky, and he can see his new stars no more! What a night! What bursting of world on world! Good Galileo! how weak to pity thee, when God gives thee, of all his race, the virgin vision of his beautiful worlds!

Now the great astronomer spent his nights for ten years in communing with his new stars. He "continued with incredible assiduity and perseverance to observe, and record his observations, in that series of Ephemerides whose loss the scientific world have deplored from that generation to the present. At the end of ten years, his work was still undone; he had not yet formed his perpetual tables of the satellites as he had intended, for the practical uses of future ages.

"In 1637, total blindness put all further hope of

completing the materials for the construction of the tables he had projected, entirely out of the question. The night had come. Those poor, over-labored eyeballs, burning in their fevered sockets with too many a long night's painful and anxious watching, had at length refused further to obey the still unvanquished mind; a few short years remained for that yet to labor;—but a few. In January, 1642, his work was done, and the weary spirit passed to its rest."

Soon after he became blind, he confided all his observations on the satellites of Jupiter, to the monk Renieri, a Genoese professor in the University of Pisa,—he had been Galileo's pupil. The pupil worked diligently to fulfil his mission of completing the labor, but he died only six years after his master. What then became of these invaluable papers, no one knew but the sacrilegious hand that robbed them, and the God of Galileo, whose eye watched them through two centuries. "It is said by some, that certain monks—*cucullatos homines*—while Renieri was breathing his last, broke into the dwelling of the dying man, and having burst open his book-cases, carried off all the manuscripts."—(Fabbioni *Lettere inèdite*, t. i., p. 74.) Tabbroni also says, in his notes on a Letter of Renieri, that "His Study (Renieri's) was robbed, it is supposed, by the Inquisitors, of all his own and Galileo's writings, and they all perished lamentably."

The poor monk died—two hundred years rolled away and a scene was enacted in Tuscany worthy

of this glorious land in her best days. Here I must say something of the College of the Savans of Italy.

The proceedings of this Congress of science are now probably regarded with deeper interest than those of any other in the world. It had, for a long time, been proposed to organize a scientific Congress in the peninsula; but the Italian Princes showed little favor to the project; they were too well persuaded of the dangerous tendencies of such an association—constituted, as it would necessarily be, of the elements of power and of revolution—for every active mind, throughout the Old World, is now turning its heated imagination towards *change*; its only hope is in slow, or in rapid revolution. In Italy, where more noble aspirations have been dampened, more rebellions crushed, and where more martyrs have fallen in the cause of freedom, than in all the rest of the world, a Congress of learned men was regarded with the deepest suspicion.

For many years, all attempts were unsuccessful; they did not dare to meet, although they wished to assemble only to advance the cause of science and art. At last the Grand Duke of Tuscany—that enlightened and munificent prince who has always been the friend of truth and of liberty—came forward and removed every obstacle. With a spirit worthy of the days of the Medici, when Florence was the university, the school of democracy, and the literary paradise of the world, he invited the learned men of Italy to assemble, first at

Pisa (in 1840), and in the following year at his Capital to hold their Congress. They flocked up by hundreds from every part of the peninsula, and an enthusiasm was felt along the banks of the Arno, like the glorious days of Cosimo and Lorenzo de' Medici, when the Greek scholars fled from the Byzantine ruins with their manuscripts, to take shelter under the powerful protection of those noble princes. Those scholars made, too, a noble return for their generous patronage. They wrote the names of their patrons in letters of gold upon the history of the world. When these *scienziati* met in Florence, every house there was thrown open to them, from the palace of the Grand Duke to the garret of the poor scholar; and for two weeks Florence was a scene of joy and festivity. The Grand Duke had (among his ample and princely preparations) a temple erected, in which were gathered all the relics of Galileo—his manuscripts, his instruments, and all his works. The shrine was illustrated by the first artists in Florence, and one of her best native sculptors had cut a classic statue of the great astronomer.* The Grand Duke opened the doors, and led the way, followed by *one thousand learned men*, who gathered around this hallowed shrine, to consecrate the temple to the memory and the fame of the great prisoner, who made the earth go round the sun.

* I was so much pleased with this noble statue, I had a drawing made of it, which has been engraved for this work. The Reader finds it on the opposite page.

On this great occasion, Signor Eugenio Albèri, one of the most profound and elegant scholars of Europe, and one of the noblest Italians, of any age, suggested to the Grand Duke, "the idea of raising yet another, and even probably a more durable monument, to the memory of the Tuscan Philosopher, in the form of a complete edition of his works." This munificent Prince received the suggestion in a manner worthy of a scholar. No complete edition of the works of Galileo had ever appeared. Before he came to the throne, the present Grand Duke had collected, at great expense, all the MSS. of Galileo known to exist, and every writing and document that could throw any light upon his labors or history. This collection formed two hundred volumes—eighty of them by Galileo, one third of which had never been printed. It was hoped that from so many valuable unexplored materials, a new edition of Galileo might be published, that would be a rich legacy to the literary world. This lofty and difficult mission was committed by the Grand Duke to Signor Albèri, whom he esteemed better qualified for the task than any other Italian. The doors of the Pitti Palace were immediately thrown open to him, and he began his Herculean labor. He prosecuted his work with incredible energy, and in two years, two volumes were issued. In giving me an account of these matters, Albèri said: "It was a severe task, but it was a grateful one, to turn over and decypher, whatever pains it might give me, these venerable

papers. At last, one glorious spring morning in April, 1843, while I was lamenting, as all scholars had done a thousand times, the loss of Galileo's observations upon the Satellites of Jupiter, *I discovered them!* I could not contain my joy, and I could hardly believe it—it seemed too good to be true, that those priceless *reliquiæ* of that wonderful man were indeed still in existence! How my enlightened and magnanimous Prince will receive me, when I go to him! What news will this be to the astronomers of Europe and of America! I hastened to the Prince, with my treasures in both hands, and laid them on his table. He received me with kindness, with joy, and with exultation: and it was the happiest day of my life!"

Signor Albèri, however, had only plunged into a sea of trouble. Certain learned fools, who had had the handling of those same MSS. years before, and whose duty it had been to make a careful catalogue of them, had been too stupid to discover what they were, and now, ashamed of their stupidity, came forward, and denied their genuineness. The quarrel has been a long one, and it has called out from a base set of men, led on by the Jesuits, an assault upon Signor Albèri, in which more ignorance, bigotry, malignity, and intrigue, have been displayed, than in any literary quarrel of modern Europe. The most desperate efforts were made, to poison the mind of the Prince towards Signor Albèri; but he stood firm, and his Sovereign stood firm beside him; and

the work is now being triumphantly brought to a conclusion.

To show the noble spirit of the Grand Duke :— Only one man in all Italy was believed capable of calculating the observations of Galileo—they were so learned and profound. This was an aged astronomer in Rome, and he was nearly blind. But all the calculations of the MSS. were reproduced, *fac simile*, on a large scale, that the blind old scholar might be able to understand them. This was attended with an incalculable expense! But the Grand Duke did not hesitate a moment. This first complete edition of Galileo, including the lost MSS., is now being published at the Grand Duke's press, in superb style, and it is sold so low, all scholars who wish may have it. It will embrace about fifteen large volumes.* Upon the temple of Galileo alone, the Grand Duke expended over two hundred thou-

* There are many scholars in this country, who may wish to procure this great work, for themselves, or for public libraries. To such I will say, that anticipating this want, I made arrangements with Signor Albèri, by which any American who wishes, may obtain it, at a discount of 25 per cent. from the price at Florence. It would afford me great pleasure to render any facilities in the promotion of such a desire; and any person who shall deposit with my publishers, the sum of twenty-five dollars, will receive from Italy, on my return there, the entire work, free of costs. This will cover the expense, and no commissions, or charges of any kind, will be made.

sand dollars! The MSS. and the cost of publication, amount to a still larger sum! Such is the munificent spirit of this noble patron of learning. Upon one man—the fame and the works of one scholar—the Grand Duke has expended more than our Republic has ever done for promotion of letters, from its first foundation, and yet his annual revenue is not as great, I believe, as that of the State of New York! An example well worthy of admiration, and of imitation. Poor Galileo! justice has been done thee, at last.

A word now about the Congress of Savans, and I will bring my long letter to a close. What has all this to do with the Congress of Italian Scholars, who meet in one of the Italian capitals, every year? The answer is soon given. For the first time during a century, men are allowed, in Italy, to assemble to discuss truth—to investigate science—to exercise guardianship over the interests and the rights of men. This congress constitutes a tribunal, before which the claims of Italians are to be heard, and by which they are to be decided.

No one will conclude, from all this, that these men have issued any declaration of political independence, or attempted any bold overthrow of the despotisms of their country. This would have been fatal to all their hopes. They are watched, and they know it. The governments of Italy send their spies to their meetings, and these spies are sleepless. All that these scholars say, and do, and

feel, is known within the private cabinets of all the Italian Princes. One false step—one rash measure—and the work of years would be lost! But the men who control this congress and its operations, will take care of the interests entrusted to them. They know that what they win slowly, they will hold securely. The principles they discuss, the doctrines they settle, they settle for ever. But their real progress is not to be measured by their *apparent* advancement. They gain more in the aggregate, however, than would readily be believed. Who does not know the electric power of thought and sympathy, running along chords that vibrate through congregated masses everywhere? Who does not know that men feel more strongly, and speak more boldly, when they gather by hundreds?

All Italy feels that her cause is advocated, and her rights, remembered, in this congress. She knows, too, this is a *national* movement, confined to no section, to no province; that the men who go up to these congresses, assemble from under the snows of the Alps, and from the quiet and dreamy shores of the Gulf of Salerno. It is the first movement which promises much hope to Italy; for it is the first movement in the modern history of Italy, which has gathered the leaders, and roused the sympathies of the whole people.

In Florence, where liberty held her earliest vigils during the dark night of the middle ages—where her fires were kept burning on purer and nobler

altars than had been built elsewhere—these scholars gathered, consulted, spoke, and decided; and the result was, that a new hope sprung up in the bosom of the Italian people; a new fire seemed to be once more kindled, which would rally around it the expiring hopes of a prostrate people.

After the agitations and the achievements of the French revolution had passed, Italy had waited patiently for a day of deliverance. The Consulate came, and with it came a day of hope. The magnificent vision of the Napoleon Empire appeared, and the Italians, once more intoxicated with hope, offered all they had—their brave arms, and their generous enthusiasm—to the Corsican soldier. While Napoleon's star blazed on, Italy was in the ascendant; when he fell, she fell with him, and she fell for more than one generation. The ancient despotisms, which had steeped a prostrate land in the torpor of political death for a whole century, again erected their black thrones, and all the hopes and the dreams of freedom and of advancement, were swept away in a single hour by standing armies, an Argus-eyed police, and a vigilant censorship. A political death now followed, which cannot be compared to anything but the death of *Dante's Inferno*,—a death filled with torments, and tortures, and gaspings, and struggles, over whose gloom no light flashes, but the uncertain gleams of a feverish dream.

Such has been the state of Italy till 1840. And now a new period has come—a period when the

spirit of the modern age has breathed its light and its hope over whole races and nations—when the cruel burdens that have weighed down the race, are beginning to be unbound—when the fetters that have chafed away the galled limbs of man are beginning to snap asunder.

Your true —, &c.

LETTER VII.

Florence, —, 1845.

DEAR —,

SINCE my letter about the Vespucci Family, I have often met them, and they have won my heart completely. The sisters are highly esteemed for their purity, and beloved for their kind and amiable qualities. They are exceedingly intelligent and clever, and I find everybody loves them. The young Cavalier Amerigo is a heroic fellow, who works for his bread, and says some good luck will turn up for them all, one day or another. He, and indeed all of them, are anxious to come and live in this country. "Do you think," said the brother to me, this morning, "that I could get my living in America? I think I could learn to cut down your big trees, and build a log cabin."

A few mornings ago, I received a box, with a note. You may judge of my surprise, when I opened the letter, and found it contained a request, signed by all the family, that, as I was the first American who had ever sought them out, it was the first time they had ever had an opportunity of sending to America the portrait of their ancestor, and they beg-

ged I would accept the picture, as a token of their regard for myself and for the American People. I opened the box, and saw it contained the beautiful portrait of Vespuccius, painted by Bronzino, his friend, during his life-time. What to do with the picture, required very little time for me to decide. I certainly would not accept such a gift for *myself*, for I could never make any proper return for so valuable a relic. Nor, if I could, would I rob the family of almost the last fragment of the Discoverer's wealth or treasures still left them. I sent it back, and went to them to make an explanation. They all seemed wounded that I had not accepted the picture, and they besought me to comply with their request; but I did not feel it would be right to do so.

The next day the portrait came back again, leaded and sealed by the officer of Customs, the exportation permission given, and the duty paid. Young Amerigo came in soon after, and begged me not to deny their request. "We would not sell it," said he, "but we wish to have it go to the New World, and you may do what you please with it there."

I took it on these conditions, and I shall carry it with me to Washington, to see if the Government will not purchase it for the Capitol. To us it will be invaluable. It is the best, and almost the only undoubted portrait of Vespuccius, in the world. It has always been in the possession of the family, the letters of the family assure me, and I am told by many of the Florentines, it is not only authentic be-

yond a doubt, but one of the best portraits made during that early period. Powers was delighted when he saw it, and his first exclamation was—"Our government must have it for the Capitol, at any price." He thus speaks of it in a note, last evening. * * "Your picture of Americus Vesputius ought to belong to our government, and be placed in the Capitol. I think it is the original, from which the best engravings of the great man have all been taken. There are no artists of our day who paint such pictures. There are some, perhaps, who paint as well, but not in that style,—and for me, that would be proof enough of its authenticity, if there were wanting others of the most satisfactory kind. I have not seen young Americus," &c.

I shall give Congress an opportunity of purchasing this invaluable portrait, the only one they will ever be able to get, and it will then be in my power to show the family that the American Congress are not unmindful of the children of the man who discovered the continent. Some fortunate accident may yet give us the portrait of Columbus in Spain; and then we shall have two works of art, simple, it is true, but worth more to our nation than any others in the world. I do not know what our Government may ever be inclined to do for the Vespucci family. I hope some suitable recognition of them will be had. Some small tract of land, at least, it would not be improper to give them from the public domain; and it would be an act which would win the gratitude of

the family for ever, and the admiration of all Europe. You may judge of the feelings of the Grand Duke by the following Letter I had the honor to receive a day or two ago from his Intimate Secretary, who wrote it at the dictation (I am informed) of the Sovereign himself. I give it to you literally.

HONORABLE SIGNORE :

HIS Imperial and Royal Highness, the most Serene Arch Duke of Austria, Grand Duke of Tuscany, my August Sovereign to whom, you, Honorable Signore, have expressed a belief, that the generous and powerful American Nation would be disposed to recognize with favor, by some act of liberality, the last children of Americus Vespucius ; has charged me to assure you, in his Royal Name, that it would prove infinitely grateful to him and his Government, if ever there should be made so solemn a demonstration of gratitude and of munificence.

The name of that Great Man, venerated from one sea to the other, gathers in itself too grand a part of the glories of Tuscany, to make it possible that the family which has descended from him should ever be forgotten by us. They have long enjoyed beneficence and honors ; and the young Amerigo, son of Cavalier Captain Cesare Vespucci, is now an *employé* in a Royal Department. He is the last offspring of the family of that Illustrious Italian, who brought to the light of civilisation that vast land which bears

his name, and which is now advancing the proud mother of many noble and generous children.

I have the honor to subscribe myself, with sentiments of distinguished consideration, your most devoted and obedient servant,

CAVALIERE CARLO FELICI.

Intimate Secretary of the Cabinet of H. I. and R. H.

The Grand Duke of Tuscany.

Sig'r. C. EDWARDS LESTER,

Consul of the United States }
of America at Genoa. }

Florence, April 8, 1845.

THIS noble Letter was attended by a permission from the Grand Duke to make any use of it I might judge would conduce to the interests of the Vespucci family. Such is the spirit of this Prince, who is, indeed, worthy of holding sway over the city where Lorenzo de' Medici lived to honor all that was noble in man's heart, or lofty in genius.

Your true—



distinguished physicians it had given to the world, and not for its wealth or titles. San Giorgio held no festival, at the birth of the infant, but for ages she will show to the stranger, who goes to that little hamlet, the house in which the historian was born, and two worlds will contend for the honor of exalting his fame.

The education of young men of those times robbed intellect of its vigor. It was an organized system of spiritual despotism. Alfieri has given a graphic picture of it in his Autobiography. "Here I was an ass among asses, and under an ass for a teacher. * * We translated, to be sure, the lives of Cornelius Nepos, but none of us—probably not even the master himself—knew who these men were, whose lives we studied, nor in what country they were born, nor in what age, nor under what sort of governments they lived, nor, indeed, what a government meant. All our ideas were circumscribed, false, or confused: no aim in the teaching, and least of all, any attraction for the pupils. No one gave any attention to us, except by chance, and whoever did was sure not to understand his business. This is youth, cruelly and hopelessly betrayed."

But the young Botta was prepared for the University under the teachings of his own father, who was a man of rare and rich learning. He had one book which has stirred more deeply the blood of young Italians than any other, and he read it with strange enthusiasm. I refer to DANTE. That idea, which

the young Italian who reads those vigorous writers, can never lose sight of, that Italy has twice been Queen of the World, inflamed his love of country, which became the great passion of his life.

The first master his father entrusted him to, was the learned and patriotic Carlo Tinivelli, whose breast was pierced by the balls of myrmidon soldiers. He died a martyr, but he left a pupil, who swore over his grave, to tell the story of Italy's sorrows, and win for her the sympathy of the world.

He studied medicine in the University of Turin, and his genius and application soon covered him with the highest academic honors.

France was rocked by a storm which drove her over her borders. From the writings of the great authors of past ages, Botta had drawn a classic idea of the fair form of Liberty, and when he heard the murmur of the French Revolution, which afterwards heaved thrones and dynasties, he dreamed, with many a brave heart, that the day of the World's Emancipation had come. Thus Botta, in seeking the liberty of his country, lost his own, and he dragged out two years of his early manhood in a tyrant's prison. But the chained eagle's talons were growing, and one day despotism would feel them.

When he came out of prison, he joined the army of Napoleon, as a surgeon, "to heal up," says he, "the wounds of liberty's crusaders." In 1798, he was sent to the Levant, with the division of the French army under Buonaparte, where he wrote a

description of the island of Corfu, and the maladies of those climates. When the king who had put chains on the limbs of Botta, was himself driven an exile from the home of his fathers, and obliged to hide his head from the advancing legions of the Republic of France, he was glad to consult this book of his prisoner, to heal his own diseases!

In 1799 Joubert appointed Botta member of the Provisional Government of Piedmont—when this was dissolved he was chosen a member of the administration of the department of the B——. The French were driven out of Italy and Botta escaped with them. Soon after, Napoleon led once more his brave men across the Alps. They swept down through the beautiful vale of Piedmont and planted their standard on the soil of Marengo. One battle gave them the Peninsula. He was now elected a member of the *Consulta* of Piedmont, soon after of the Executive Commission, and finally of the General Administration of his native country.—Once ruler over the land that gave him birth, holding the power and living in the palace of the coward king who had thrown him into a dungeon, what revenge did this magnanimous soul take? One of his first acts was to pass a decree, giving to the very University where he had studied, half a million of francs a year! Like all friends of liberty, he knew that education was its best safeguard. But as Napoleon's star rose high in the heavens, he began to consolidate his empire, and Piedmont was merged in the grand Republic. Botta

was one of the deputation sent to Paris to thank France for achieving the liberty of Piedmont. He was elected a member of the Legislature from the Department of the Doura in 1804. In 1808 he was made Vice President—re-elected the following year,—proposed as a candidate for the questorship, and Napoleon conferred on him the decoration of the order of the Union. On the fall of Napoleon, he was offered an office of emolument by the Bourbons—but he was a Republican and he would not accept it, although he had deserted the Emperor when he became false to liberty. He was invited by the very sovereign who had imprisoned him once, to return to his capital—with tempting promises. He knew the crafty tyrant too well,—he would not put himself in his power, nor would he again behold the triumph of despotism in his native land, where the tree of liberty planted by himself had been plucked up by the roots. Like Dante, disgusted with the shuffling of priests, kings and cabinets, he turned his back on the black form of tyranny and flew to the solitude of his books. He poured out the burdens of his pent-up heart upon the bosom of history, and never did a scholar take up the pen with a deeper reverence for truth, a more generous confidence in man, a more burning love of liberty, or a deeper indignation against tyranny than he. He might not guide his country on to freedom, and “he leaped the wave,” says an Italian writer, “to find in the West, the temple

of living and triumphant liberty, as his fellow countryman had done to find a new world."

In the language of the brave and noble Becchi, whose voice is heard in the solemn assembly of the Academy of the Crusca in 1838, at Florence :—His times did not suffer him to hint at the longed for independence of his country ; and his heart overflowing with pure and genuine liberty, he determined to send down to posterity the story of the war which the Americans sustained to shake off the tyranny of Great Britain, and achieve a liberty they had inherited from their sires who had stemmed the billows and sought, in the midst of furious tempests, battling wild beasts, savage men, and pestilence, which even heaven itself seemed in wrath to send among them. That was not like most wars, a strife of soldiers and cabinets, but the firm will of a brave people defending their own rights ; it was not an impulse of hot and factious minds, who knew not what they wanted nor willed, but a determination in which men consume all their forces, a generous faith in God and liberty and the human soul, constant, and firm, ready for the greatest sacrifices of life and heart. To relate such a story, no one was worthy but a high magnanimous man, and no European was ready to do it but Botta—no one but him attempted it. Making a treasure of all the documents which at this period appeared in America, in England and France, upon this grave subject, he sifted falsehood from truth ; and while

history was waiting for some one to erect from all these rich, but chaotic materials a durable monument for her archives, he came forward, and the result proved, that among us, the genius of Livy and of Sallust, of Machiavelli and of Guicciardini, was not yet spent. The cause of the Colonists, so just and holy, appealed strongly to Botta; but he did not forget, for all this, the duty of impartiality. Nor was he blinded by the eloquence, the persuasion that shone out in the British Parliament. Very learned and very great men defended the English cause; he heard but faintly the humble voices of the American assemblies, and he knew the subtleties and tricks of that nation which reaches the apex of power. While in America New men spake, made solemn by the load of responsibility of generations on their shoulders, and more than all, uncertainty of the end fortune had in store for them. And Botta, in imitation of the example of Livy, of Thucydides, of Xenophon and other ancient masters, was obliged to make his heroes speak. No task could be harder than to arrange his materials, gathered from such varied and conflicting quarters, to describe revolutions and events, so unprecedented and unlooked for, and maintain through all a unity of action, and make a whole of so many episodes, all important but surrounded by darkness, and cover it all with a light, which could not blind or mislead. And yet such is the art he uses in the narration, that the reader is always at home, be he upon the sea, or in battle, in private

councils, or deliberative assemblies, where he sees great men face to face on all sides, and high and luminous over all, like a bright light-house, stands Washington, the Genius of American Independence. The cause of that war, the people, the life of the New World, cut the historian off from all models. Vast deserts, immense lakes, battles by land and sea, revolution on one side and desperation on the other, savages and forests, frequent cessation, lawful and unlawful artifices, here men generous, there wild savages, now vices, now virtues,—all come in to form the grand catastrophe of American liberty.

But the genius of Botta overcame all these obstacles, and his history, in the historic art, and in its philosophy, will long stand without a rival, and foreign nations will for ever point us to it. In style, the power of his language is confessed on all sides. Botta, it is true, adopted a style now little used, and his resemblance is to be found only in the writers of the century of Dante and Boccaccio, and in the times of Leo X. and Clement VII.

The long labors of that great work, so far from enfeebling the spirit of Botta, only the more deeply fired his soul. But such was the uncertainty of fortune, and finding no ear in living men for the history of the wonderful events of his own time, he gave himself up to poetry, and wrote "*Il Camillo, o bejo Conquistato*," an epic of twelve Cantos.

And then he wrote the history of his own beloved Italy, and placed himself by the side of Machiavelli.

But long before this noble History was finished, his means failed, and his health began to give way. Some friends of letters in Italy, hearing that he was living in poverty in Paris, sent him aid, and he finished the work. The grand events of the period he writes of—from 1534, where Guicciardini stops, to 1789, two centuries and a half—are, the Progress of the Reformation, the Council of Trent, the rise of the Jesuits, the Wars of Charles V. and Francis I., the usurpation of the sovereignty of Florence by the Medici, the destruction of the Republic of Siena, the Conspiracies of the Fieschi, of Vachero, of Raffaele della Torre, the rise of Genoa against the Austrians, the wars of Piedmont, of Vallentina of Corsica, the Revolutions of Naples, the plot of the Spanish against Venice, the wars of Cyprus, of Candia, and of Corfu, that for the succession of Spain, of Austria, and of Poland,—a work to discourage a historian! but in five years it was done.

He did for Italy what he had done for America. He tried to give life to his country, but all in vain. Italy, no longer the mistress of provinces, has for two centuries had no history of her own, deprived of all political existence. "Reading Botta, a joy, an exultation comes into the soul, that one is a son of that classic land which, although robbed of empire, shows how well she has reigned."

But all these noble works, that in other times, and among other men, would have led him to wealth and consequence, were not enough to conquer the

darkness of Botta's fate. His wife, too, was taken ill with him, and although he was living with the utmost economy, he was obliged to sell six hundred copies of his *History of America* for waste paper, to pay for his medicine, at the very period the French translator of that work received 6000 dollars for his labors, and the American translator perhaps a larger sum. Think of the misery to which this, one of the first writers of his age, was reduced! And foreigners could say with bitter sarcasm, that Italy, which had seen with indifference the stripes of Galileo, of Tasso, left to starve a Botta in a foreign land, had he not been assisted by the King of Sardinia, who wished to atone in part for the cruelty Botta had suffered at the hands of his kinsman. He had come out poor from offices where others had become rich. But the remembrance of his good deeds made him happy in his want and his suffering. The Academy of Crusca in 1830 decreed to him entire the honors they had always before divided—a monument to his honor was raised in a distant government of South America, and cannon fired and funeral honors decreed "*to our Thucydides*." In old time foreigners came to Rome only to see Livy, and in our times Venetian and Parisian young men have gone only to see the grave of the defender of their Republic.

He died in Paris 10th August, 1837. He had ordered that no parade attend his death,—but friends of liberty of all nations in Paris followed him to the

tomb—Garlands were cast by strangers upon his bier and all knew he was a son of Italy.

It was proposed that Europe and America should rear a monument fitting his fame, and Warden, our former Consul at Paris, acted in behalf of America. But his call was unheeded. Noble Warden! Notice was given that at his birthplace a monument would be raised to his fame—but what was done? One of his own relatives told me that not enough had been raised to distinguish him from any other man.

I cannot think of the debt we owe this noble historian without feeling ashamed that the country has never recognized it. Long ago Congress should have commissioned a statue to him for our Capitol—and citizenship offered to his sons.

The American who goes through Italy finds Botta's History in almost every house. He taught Italy and her people the merits of that great issue our fathers made with England—he told the story of the struggles, the heroism and the final triumph of the men of the Revolution: and the names of those immortal heroes are sounded throughout the peninsula, and their statues and busts have been inaugurated, and pictures painted for cabinets, and galleries, and gardens. (Read Headley's description of the bust of Washington, in the garden of the noble Marquis de Negro. It was after finishing the reading of Botta's History of the American War, that the patriot scholar commissioned the bust. All Genoa crowded with enthusiasm to its inauguration, and the name

of Washington went up with *vivas* from the city of palaces! They had read Botta. Sovereigns have stood uncovered before that bust, when they visited the garden. And when the American, a pilgrim from the Western World, in walking around that rampart terrace, comes to that bust, tears of gratitude fall unbidden over the memory of Botta, who has told our hero's story to the noble Italians.)

But the day will come when the story of Botta's poverty, and struggles, and achievements in our cause, will be told in our Congress; and when they hear how he was obliged to sell six hundred copies of our history to get medicine to keep his suffering wife out of the grave, that he sleeps unhonored in a land of strangers, the walls of that Capitol will cry out for his statue, and its passages will ring with acclamations to his fame.

These, Dear —, are the four men who illustrate the four ages of modern Italy. MICHAEL ANGELO tells us everything of the middle ages, when Arts and Letters revived to sleep no more—AMERICUS VESPUCCIUS, of the splendid rise of modern Commerce—GALILEO, of the martyrdom of Science, and its final triumph over superstition; and CARLO BOTTA is the living voice of ten thousand brave Italians of our own times, who have no language in which to speak their woes.

But their day will come.

Your true—

LETTER IX.

Florence, —, 1845.

DEAR —,

I HAVE been thinking to-day of THE SOCIAL LIFE AND THE NATIONAL SPIRIT OF AMERICA—WHAT WE HAVE BEEN, AND WHAT WE SHALL BE. Said Powers to me, this morning, as we were talking about this matter, “Our Government seems slow to learn what the People have felt from the beginning, and tried in every new election to teach their public servants—to *develope the true resources of the Nation*. I do not speak of its physical resources only, nor chiefly—I do not allude to a Protective Tariff—nor to Roads, or Canals. In all these respects the Government has perhaps done more than its duty already; for the energy and enterprise of our population are so unbounded, they need little aid or urging in carrying on such works. The Corporation of New York have expended more money upon the Croton Aqueduct, and founded a nobler work than the General Government will be likely to do for many years to come. The State of New York has constructed from her own unaided resources, a Canal which surpasses any public work in the world. But

General Governments work slow ; they are always behind the civilisation of the people, when a rational degree of liberty prevails, even in such matters. But I speak of something more important to a nation's power, durability, and glory, than Roads, Aqueducts, and Canals."

It is a matter of little consequence to the people, whether the Government at Washington, or that of the separate States, make such or such improvements, compared with the wisdom that guides the energies and developes the intellectual and moral powers of the Nation. There are higher and nobler interests for the Government to watch over, than to take care of the Currency. How much misery should we all have been spared—how much honesty—how much respectability should we have saved, had the Government confined its legislation within the narrow circle prescribed to its power by the Founders of the Constitution ! How much corruption in public men, and public agents, and public councils, should we escape by regarding the Administration and the Congress at Washington as invested *only* with the power necessary to conduct public affairs, to guard public interests, and protect the public reputation and the National Glory ! How vigilant have politicians been to repress every movement on the part of Congress or the President, to encourage Art, Science, and a National spirit ! A hundred thousand dollars are thought to be worse than thrown away, devoted to a Naval or Military School, or an Institution of Art

or Science! And yet we profess to regard the spirit of our Fathers, whose last counsels were to train up enlightened and educated men for the service, the support and ornament of the state. As for public education—the great secret of our public virtue and public prosperity—when did the General Government ever do anything for that? Why, Congress seem more than reluctant even to *expend* a Smithsonian bequest, and found an Institution for the promotion of Art and Science, when the money has been given for that purpose by a European.

The National Institute, which has already shed so much glory over America, in the estimation of the learned and the great of Europe, struggles on without the aid of a dollar from the General Government; while, I believe, there is not among all the Despotic Governments of Europe, a Capital that is not adorned with some such noble National Institution, generously aided by the Sovereign. These matters are better understood abroad, where other things are done so badly; and I am persuaded that to this spirit of fostering great Institutions, we are indebted for all modern civilisation in the Old World and the New. I have heard from the lips of an European sovereign, the noblest tribute of admiration to our Government for her generous patronage of Public Institutions. The National Institute at Washington was cited in illustration of this; and the Sovereign supposed it had been founded and supported by the Public purse. I was in a quandary

what to say; I could not but correct the mistake, however proud I might be of the compliment to my Government. I replied that the Government had, indeed, favored that noble Institution; but, from beginning to end, the world might thank a few private individuals for its foundation and support. His majesty could hardly comprehend the matter, how a society of private men could bring forward an Institution, which had already attracted the attention of all Europe, and, in five years, won a fame so bright, sovereigns were proud of being elected its members.

But I did not give the Government credit for all she had done. I did not say that a small package, intrusted to my care by one of the Savans of Italy, and sent by mail to Washington (via Havre) for the National Institute, to the care of the Department of State, was refused to Mr. Markoe, unless he would pay twenty-two dollars postage! And yet members of Congress were then "franking dirty shirts" to be sent by mail home to their *laundresses*, and the Post-master General foots the bill! If this be not what is called penny-wise and pound-foolish, there is only one reason why, and it is a pretty good one; for it seems to me to be penny-foolish and pound-mad. And yet, so false and so low are the views many entertain of the purposes of the General Government, that the propriety of the Post-Office regulations which retained that package, would hardly be questioned. It will be said by such, "what do the *people* care

about learned disquisitions on abstruse questions, ten to one in another language?" The best answer I could make would be: "Probably ten times as much as many of their representatives."

The amount of money I have at my banker's, the number of dishes set on my table, the kind of carriage I ride in, or if I ride in none at all, have very little to do with my true interests, as a man or a citizen. These are only accidents, adjuncts, circumstances, which have no necessary relation with my great interests for this world or the world to come. They have little to do with the good I am to confer on my fellow-men, or the glory I am to shed over my country. Allen's, and Stark's, and Putnam's grand-children may ride in carriages, but their country only asks of them, when the crisis comes, to show themselves the men their fathers were, who went at best on horseback, or more probably a-foot. In the young days of the Roman Republic, a plain old farmer was the man in whom the hopes of that glorious people on the shores of the Tiber seem to have been treasured up; and probably his house and his furniture would have stood a small chance, if brought under the hammer, which not unlikely fell afterwards upon the gilded effects of some of the *gentry* of Rome, who were sent to call him from the plough.*

* Taste for elegant equipages, and *Parisian modes*, and costly gewgaws, seems to have been indulged in, in all ages, chiefly by those who could least afford it; and some

Nor let it be supposed, either, that poverty gives a man any particular or exclusive claim to be a Reformer, or a Patriot. In the early history of America, and down through the stormy days of the Revolution, many of the best men in the nation were the best born, the best educated, and held the largest estates. More than one illustrious name that shines in the history of European liberty, and stood boldly forward in the front rank of battle and freedom, is associated with chivalry. Henry Quatre was a royal Prince. Cromwell, and Hampden, and Russell, the Strozzi, the Capponi, the Ruccellai, and the *first* of the Medici, in Florence, are familiar to our childhood's ears, and many of them were the brightest of the middle ages, and they have left names associated with all that is brave in chivalry, and generous in patriotism.

We should feel that the rank or the wealth of our citizens ought to give them no title to consideration above their fellow-countrymen, unless they are superior to them in those qualities that illuminate and purify the world. Let the man who has rendered the greatest services to the nation, whoever he may be, receive the highest tokens of the nation's gratitude. Let those who seek for place, and station, and emolument, know, that nothing but real merit can be rewarded by governmental patronage, and the

curious old Roman, who had no particular fondness for such things, left a very amusing account of these *Auctions of Aristocratic effects in Rome*.

struggle for office, which now becomes a periodical crusade on the election of any President, will cease, and no man will ask for place but those who have real claims for consideration. If an office is to be given of a diplomatic kind, let it be conferred upon a man who has already distinguished himself in a similar subordinate station, by fidelity, ability, and address. We have such men. John Quincy Adams was trained up a diplomatist, and few have filled such stations with so much ability and general satisfaction. I might illustrate this point more fully, but I shall do so in another place. It is a matter which cannot be disposed of in a moment—an evil lies under the surface, which has been the cause and the effect of public corruption ; and it has purchased for us dishonesty at home, and contempt abroad. But the evil is to be corrected only by appealing to the people, for the experience of more than half a century has proved, that when abuses of public servants are known to the people, they lose no time in providing the remedy—they find men who will serve them better.

I was saying that no Congress or Administration of our country, in our times, seems to have discovered the way to develop the real resources of the nation—in other words, neither their public acts nor speeches have a tendency to foster a wide national spirit.

One of the strongest and most wakeful sentiments God has mingled in the constitution of man, is a love

of being remembered when we are dead. There are few who do not feel, coming up from the bosom with the sigh of life's last emotions, a desire to be cherished in the recollections of men. Nothing is so dreadful as to be forgotten ; and how common is the request of the dying, to have some stone set over his dust, to mark where the sleeper lies ! It is a natural feeling, and it has been consecrated by the seal of Heaven. No city was ever so gorgeously filled with national monuments as Jerusalem. All the early nations illustrated their history by public monuments, for this was perhaps the loftiest feeling of antiquity ; and their ruins are sought eagerly by the modern traveller, who wanders over the plains of Asia. Yucatan, and the provinces of Central America, are still covered with monuments more wonderful than those on the banks of the Nile, and they show a higher civilisation. Our country has just turned its attention to the monuments strewn over our continent by primeval generations, and I doubt not the time will come, when these monuments will prove sure and infallible guides to the decyphering of the history of those ancient races. Indeed, we even now consider the monuments left by the primitive nations, the safest, and often the only guide to a knowledge of their real civilisation.

But what have we yet reared in America, that would save us from oblivion, should we be blasted like the nations of Asia, and the tide of ages in their desolations sweep over us ? I know of nothing but the

monument at Bunker Hill ; and it is the most beautiful, the most appropriate, and the most enduring of modern times. The Washington monument, at Baltimore, is a beautiful structure, and does great honor to that city, and for a city none could be more beautiful ; but it will not be enduring—a few centuries will sweep it away. But I should perhaps have spared even this remark, for we have nothing else that can be compared with it in the nation, but the glorious massive granite pile at Bunker Hill, which a foreigner of taste declared to be the most affecting and the most appropriate monument in the world. In justice, however, to myself, I would say that I make the remark of the Washington monument, only as a *national* tribute. It is so called, although I cannot tell why, for it was erected by a comparatively small number of individuals, and does far more honor to the beautiful city it adorns than to the nation.

Pass over the Old World, and look at the monuments and colossal and equestrian statues—the arches, the tombs, the great structures decreed to illustrious men—and what a high agency have these works had in the promotion of art and civilisation, and a national spirit ! The enthusiasm and the patriotism they have kindled and kept alive, have covered Europe with glory.

So deeply has the power of monuments and traditions been felt in Europe, it has worked itself into the poetry of all its national literatures. What so

well calculated to stir up the blood of a modern enslaved Italian, as the scene in the Opera *Virginia*, where a young Roman gathers a brave band of youth around the tomb of the elder Brutus, to make them swear to take the blood of the tyrant. Such Operas have been often prohibited. The governments know that beneath that poetry and music, flows the deep feeling of outraged men. We have all heard of the soldier, shot for singing the Marseilles Hymn to his fellow-conscripts.

Monuments of all kinds are intended to illustrate noble deeds, and the feelings of the beholder partake of the associations they are designed to awaken. Who can go to the tomb of Washington, without coming away a better citizen, and a better man? Who that stands over the grave of Marco Bozzaris, would not feel it glorious to die for his country? Who would not be shocked at the thought of blood and injustice, while bending over the dust of William Penn? What Christian would not go to the stake, if he were led into the Piazza della Santa Maria Nuovella, where Savonarola was burned, and told to deny his faith? Who can repress a deep feeling of indignation, when he passes the tomb of Henry the Eighth, and thinks of his murdered wives and disinherited daughters? What was it but the desire to see the sepulchre of the Saviour, that launched millions of Crusaders upon the plains of Asia?

Will the government of the United States never

learn, that there is no safeguard so effectual to our liberty and our Constitution, as the patriotism of our public men? And when will they learn that patriotism can never be so inflamed among the masses of the people, or its holy fires kept so bright on the altar of the Capitol, as by covering the consecrated soil of the nation, and surrounding the Capitol with the statues and monuments of illustrious men, who have devoted themselves to the glory of their country?

I have sometimes fancied to myself the *environs* of the Capitol as they should be at Washington, and the feelings of the young American who walked up an avenue, on either side of which stood, in colossal bronze, the great heroes of the Revolution, with Washington at their head. The Senator, as he goes to take his seat in the public councils, should walk through lines of marble statues of all the Signers of the Declaration of Independence,—a company of men who are already regarded with more veneration, than any other perhaps who have ever lived,—and they would form such a gallery as does not exist. And in the Rotunda, let the statues of all the Presidents be placed, and merging, in the oblivion of a noble sentiment, all distinctions of party, let those men who were esteemed by their own generation qualified for that high post, stand there. And in the most sacred spot should stand, alone, a colossal bronze statue of Washington. No other should be erected near it, unless a few of the greatest states-

men and chieftains of that period be grouped around him, as the ancients represented the gods, in council at the feet of Jupiter, on Mount Olympus.

Our Campidoglio should be the most glorious and the most sacred spot on earth—except the spot where the Redeemer died. Here we should gather every trophy of victory, and every laurel of triumph. Here at last should be laid to rest the weary walls of “Old Ironsides,” and over them should float the banners taken from the enemy at Yorktown. Every relic of those dark but triumphant days, should be carefully gathered, and preserved with the sacredness with which we preserve the ark of the Constitution. And while we are gathering these trophies and treasures, these *Lares Penates* of the nation, let us look after our rusty cannon on the Potomac and the Chesapeake, or that proud structure may be laid waste again. For there is a nation so overcharged with the spirit of humanity and Christian love, and so long-sighted withal, they have lost the power of beholding the deep wretchedness of some millions of legally pauperized wretches under the shadows of their cathedrals and palaces, and their pious hearts are panting, I doubt not, for one more opportunity of effecting a landing, and sending one division of holy crusaders to the south to excite negroes to cut masters’ throats and quarter their young children, while the other comes up the Potomac to burn down our Capitol—for such is the soul of British Philanthropy.

Let the young American, whose arm may be called

on to defend yet even a monument of Washington, and who knows but his very ashes, from the descendants of our common ancestors, visit the Capitol and walk up such an avenue and survey such a group, and lay his hands on the ruined timbers of old Ironsides, and wrap himself in those flags of victory, and stand uncovered before the colossal statue of Washington, and he will need but one blast of the bugle when the crisis comes.

Patriotism is a sentiment as well as a principle, and in its sublimest elevation it becomes a passion. What so well calculated to stir its fires as a contemplation of the great patriots whose names stand bright on the rolls of the country's history? What can awaken so deep and lasting a recollection of their deeds as a sight of their monuments? One of the highest and purest motives that urge us on to lofty achievements for our country is to know that our country will cherish our names when we are dead, and not suffer them to die. During the war with Great Britain an American offered to swim under water with a bomb of powder and explode it with his own hand under the keel of an English man-of-war. He tried and failed, or 500 enemies (made such by the folly of their rulers, and not of their king)* would have been blown into another world.

* Says Benjamin West, in speaking of one of his pictures to Prof. S. F. B. Morse: "This picture is remarkable for one circumstance:—the king (Geo. III.) was sitting to me for it, when a messenger brought him the Declaration of

It is not for me to decide what part a love of fame may have had in his daring attempt ; but one thing is certain, few such deeds would ever be done in this world, if their authors were all timely warned beforehand that their names would just as soon be forgotten.

In Europe such deeds are never done without reward. In walking over the Arno the other day I saw an inscription on the side of the bridge which tells the passer-by that from that spot some twenty years ago a brave man leaped into the Arno and rescued a drowning female. Her gratitude she has shown in erecting for her rescuer this simple but affecting tribute. After reading it, it is needless to say any man would feel more like leaping into the Arno to save a drowning woman than before. This is a fact worth telling, for it illustrates the spirit of the European people.

Let us see what England has done for her great man. Who will compare, even in Great Britain, Wellington to Washington, and yet we are obliged to compare what has been done for these two men. The spoils of Wellington's victories, the cannon he took from the enemy, his grateful country melted down into a superb monument in sight of his own

Independence. He was agitated at first—then sat silent and thoughtful ; at length he said, ' Well, if they cannot be happy under my government, I hope they may not change it for a worse.' ”—*Dunlop's History of the Arts of Design*, vol. i., p. 69

windows, from which he turns his proud eye on the bronze structure as the sunset turns it into gold. They could not wait for him to die to do him more than justice—they would have him *see* the tokens of a nation's gratitude. The Government elevated him to the highest rank an Englishman can be honored with, and filled his palaces with gold and silver, and gave him vast estates and control of her public councils ; and when he comes to die, he will be followed to Westminster Abbey with his sovereign for a pall-bearer, and Parliament will appropriate without debate a million of the public treasure to erect him one of the loftiest monuments in the world.

Look at the superb structure to the honor of her great naval hero in Trafalgar Square ! Tory, Whig, Radical, Sans-culotte, all unite in this noble tribute of gratitude. Look at her column to the Duke of York ; walk over her battle-grounds ; go to the shores of India, and her islands in the distant seas ; wander through her cathedrals and chapels—everywhere the people or the Government have honored their great men. And she has *her* Campo Santo, where her illustrious men are solemnly cloistered. Even Pakenham has a splendid monument and statue in St. Paul's Cathedral, and one would suppose he died amidst the shouts of victory to gaze on the affecting tribute the nation have paid to him. Even André the spy was brought across the Atlantic by a solemn Act of Parliament, and entombed by the side

of heroes, and over him breathes the marble of a great sculptor.

And where does Hale, the American spy—a loftier and a nobler character—sleep? Nobody appears to know except a few fair brave women of Connecticut, who are building his monument with their needles; and I need not say that every stitch is to our Government a stitch of shame!! When another General Washington wants another spy, he will be found, in spite of the treatment the generous Hale has had from our hands; but the commander who sends him will have had too much experience of the gratitude of our country to tell him: “If worse comes to worst, my brave fellow, you will have a grave in your native soil, and a monument from your country.”

Courage, my countrymen! Bare your breasts to the foe! for if you fall, your grateful Government will spend days of dispute in Congress upon the propriety of granting your widows and children an humble pittance that will hardly insure them bread, and even take this away by Act of Congress if your widow marries. No stone will ever be raised over your bones except by the ploughshare; history may indeed record your merits long after you are dead, but even these may become a matter of dispute if you happen to live, and the victory be discovered to have been won by another man.

I think the ruined brick monument of Lawrence in the New York Trinity churchyard will justify me

in all I have said. If there ever was a man who died gloriously under the American flag, he was the man—and I am certain that in any other country in the world his government would have heaped all honor upon his tomb. I have heard many a brave officer in our navy speak of this neglect of our government with a feeling of indignation they could not suppress. I have had occasion to know too, that his widow has felt this cutting coldness to her very heart. The thought of that ruined monument added bitterness too to his child's last hours when she died in Florence a year ago.

It is said Republics are ungrateful—ours may be, but others have not been. A Greek or Roman soldier never drew on the helmet to rush upon the foe of his country without thinking of the glory in which his country would embalm his name. If the Roman soldier fell in battle the Republic took care to see his family did not want—if he came back from his wars victorious he retired in his old age to a little farm the Republic gave him as a reward for his patriotism, and passed his last days in peace. None of the citizens of those ancient Republics ever rendered any signal service to their country without receiving some proof of its gratitude. It was so with the glorious Republics of the middle ages. Many of those stupendous palaces which now adorn Venice, Genoa, Bologna, Florence, Pisa and Rome, were built by those Republics for their illustrious citizens.

I met in reading to-day Machiavelli's Florentine

Histories a fact of this kind—A citizen of great eminence was commissioned by his government to negotiate some important affair of state with the court of France. He died suddenly at Milan on his way to Paris. His funeral was celebrated with the most imposing honors—his body was buried in the Cathedral, and over his tomb a gorgeous monument was raised. His widow was maintained by the State as long as she lived. His sons received valuable offices under the Republic, and when his daughters married they were presented with handsome dowers from the public treasury. Such facts crowd every page of the splendid history of those Republics. This aspect of their story has never yet been presented to our people, nor indeed has any European work yet been produced which illustrates the matter fully. For us it is one of the most lucid and instructive subjects in the world. To do it justice would require the labor and the study of years on the ground once consecrated to liberty and the arts. In all ages and in all nations these kindred spirits have gone hand in hand and rejoiced in each other's light.

In our own times no lesson has perhaps been offered to us more "worthy of being learnt" than the growth and progress in power and civilisation of the Kingdom of Prussia. Nearly all she has, is the work of the last fifty years. What was Prussia in the beginning of the present century? A third rate power—now she ranks among the first. More limited in territory, in resources and population, than

Great Britain, Russia, Austria, France, Turkey or Spain; she excels them all comparatively in *real power*. She is surpassed by her neighbors in wealth, in commerce and armaments—but she has outstripped them all in true civilisation. Her common school system is the most perfect in the world,—her people the best educated, and she has more learned men than perhaps any country in Europe. The physical resources of the State have been more than doubled during a single generation, and she is now regarded as a formidable and splendid country. Why is all this, when neighboring kingdoms and empires surpass her in almost every natural advantage?

A question worthy of the consideration of all statesmen—Her councils have been controlled by men who have given the world a more impressive illustration, than any other European Power, of the wisdom of that policy which encourages a national spirit, science, mind, education, genius and art. The present king of Prussia distributes several thousand medals, prizes and honors every year among his subjects, and not a few among *distinguished* foreigners—all are rewards of merit. No matter what the candidate may have excelled in, be it art, manufactures, science, literature, agriculture, inventions, or discoveries. The 20th of February, 1845, His Majesty signed a Royal ordinance awarding recompenses to thirteen hundred of the most remarkable persons engaged in commerce and manufactures throughout

Prussia. It was more than amusing to read a list of the achievements of these Prussians. Some had received the gracious recognition of their sovereigns for offering to his notice several *American* inventions, the models of which stand in the Patent office at Washington—and of some inventions which Americans could not get patents for, as their machines had been invented and used some time before. But they were new to Prussia, and just as useful as though they had never been known before. Nor am I certain at all that the individuals who presented these inventions ever knew such things existed before. Probably not—for it has been fully ascertained that often the most important discoveries and inventions have been disputed by rivals, many of whom seem to have had more or less agency in producing them.

This policy has quadrupled the mechanical wealth and resources of Prussia in a few years. England a short time ago was supplying the people of Prussia with immense quantities of her manufactures, and Parliament believing the British interest secure in spite of the opinions and declarations of Dr. Bowring and other enlightened statesmen, treated an appeal from the Cabinet of Prussia to grant her more liberal and just concessions, with contempt. And what was the consequence? Berlin led the way in the formation of that powerful confederation called the Prussian League, which has utterly excluded whole classes of British manufactures from her mar-

kets, and in less than five years after this confederation was formed, Prussia, from being one of England's best customers, was turned into one of her most successful rivals. It has all happened as Dr. Bowring foretold when he declared that the Cabinet of Berlin was guided by a nobler, a loftier, and a more enlightened spirit than had ever characterized a single Parliament or a single administration of Great Britain.

The same wise policy has characterized the French Government from the time of Napoleon, who, after Henry IV., was the first Monarch of that brave and generous people, to learn that a nation's real power consists in the development of its intellectual strength and national spirit. No greater evidence is needed of the transcendent genius of that wonderful man, than in his choice of his civil and military officers. *Merit* could not exist in France without being detected by his all-pervading scrutiny. He gathered around his camp, and around his throne. all the intellectual and moral power of the French People, and ten years brought France from the filthy bed of a degrading despotism to the summit of glory—to the limits fixed for human empire. The mists that have clouded the judgment of mankind for thirty years, are clearing away, and Europe is beginning to discover what Napoleon and the French Revolution have done for the world. That astounding movement was the first act of that fearful tragedy that must be executed, which is to bring man off at last victorious over despotism. It was but the paroxysm

of the deceased body, when it wakes to the probing and shakes off the tyrant's hold. The struggle that is to throw off the mountains of oppression that still weigh down the nations, is yet to come. We can everywhere hear the rising cry of the awakening millions; and the time is at hand when the records of despotism shall be blotted out, from the Emerald Isle to the base of the Ural, though it should require a conflict, compared with which, the French Revolution might be called the pastime of an hour.

"God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it," would seem to be the hand-writing on every palace wall from England to the Bosphorus.

The man who stands in Europe and strives to decypher the true expression of her many featured visage, to catch the real meaning of her many voices, cannot be mistaken. And who has contributed more than any other man to the impetus of this solemn and awful movement? The candid historian has already declared that man to be the solitary prisoner of St. Helena, who would "have made the world too glad." France has forgiven him all his ambition, and six hundred thousand of her people followed his ashes to the *Invalides*.* His spirit lives

* I have, to-day, finished reading Alison's History of Modern Europe. It is, perhaps, the most subtle and dangerous assault that has been made during the present century, upon the progress of human liberty. The world did not look to a British pen for justice to France or to Napoleon; for Britain cannot forgive him or the French

in France and his policy has, since *the Three Glorious Days* of 1830, worked its way into the Legislature

People—she cannot forgive America—nor any man that has exposed her plague spots of infamy, nor a nation that has humbled or even resisted her dominion. But we were not exactly prepared to hear a Briton, and, least of all, a man born in the land of Wallace and Bruce, which drags the British fetters, sigh so sentimentally for the return of the good old days of the Bourbon tyrants, when the starved peasant went home from his day of reaping, to a hovel without bread, to die, and be cast into an unconfined grave, dug by his fellow slaves; when mistresses swarmed around *Versailles*, and four hundred thousand priests of a rotten religion, rioted upon the toil of a great people. It is nothing strange, that such a writer should represent Napoleon as a monster. But Mr. Alison made his discovery too late. Such Hand-Books of Tyranny will be harmless when the Press is free, and such men as *Thiers* are allowed to speak. The man who has read Alison, should also read *The French Revolution, and the Consulate, and the Empire*, by that illustrious minister. It is to be hoped that cheap editions and “abridgments” of these works may be also scattered, as Alison has been, broadcast over our country.

No barrier, perhaps, exists so strong against the creation of a National home feeling in America, the establishment of an independent system of criticism, and the progress of American Literature, as the want of an International Copy-Right Law, which would not only secure justice to British and American authors, but shut out the flood-tide of vile foreign Books, which are sweeping away the virtue of our young people, and burying our own authors in oblivion. Who can picture a more diseased state in certain quarters, than is shown in the fact, that ten times

of France. Louis Philippe, or more probably his children, will be called to give an account of the stewardship of that Royal House for the last fifteen years. But it will never be laid to the charge of that great Prince, that he has not fostered a noble spirit in France—done much to diffuse education among the people—patronize the Arts, honor Science and reward Literature.

This morning I received a letter from a friend in Paris, who tells of one of the noble acts of “the King of the French.” Some two years ago he sent M. Botta, a worthy son of that great friend of Liberty, who wrote the “War of American Independence,” so widely and favorably known all over the world—Consul to Nineveh! Strange place to send a Consul, some may suppose,—and such an act would be strange if perpetrated by our Government, particularly if he were sent with a generous salary, and allowed to expend any reasonable sum in the noble work of illustrating the venerable antiquities of that vast region of desolations. But the result has proved “how wisely this was done.” M. Botta has been generously aided by the French Government in his task, and his success has been brilliant. Monuments

as many copies are sold of Alison, as of Bancroft? Alison, foul with lies and prejudice, and hatred of liberty—Bancroft, filled with the spirit of the Pilgrims of Plymouth Rock, and the Cavaliers of Virginia! No remedy will be found for this tremendous evil, but in that long delayed Act of Justice, an International Copy Right Law.

have been discovered of the deepest interest, that have been hidden from the gaze of man for thousands of years. Sculptures, and inscriptions, and works of art, which indicate an advanced stage of civilisation, have rewarded his efforts, and vast collections, of such a nature, are now on their way to Paris. His labors will continue—no expense will be spared ; and it seems probable that a history of that mysterious people may yet be read in these mouldering ruins. A deeply interesting work will soon appear on the subject.

I take this as a single illustration of the spirit that reigns in France. There is probably no nation so ably and splendidly represented abroad in our times, nor, with the single exception of Prussia, any one advancing so rapidly in genuine civilisation. Who make up the Cabinet of Louis Philippe ? Who are Guizot, Molè, Thiers ?—Literary and Scientific men. Who are the leaders of the Chamber of Deputies ? Literary and Scientific men. Who are the French Ambassadors and Consuls ? Men who have rendered service to the French people. Who are the men that are Gazetted from day to day, as having received ribbons, crosses, honors and prizes, not only in France, but all over Europe ? In nearly every instance. they had deserved it well.

These things are so constantly occurring in Europe, one can scarcely take up a continental gazette without finding them. I believe there is hardly a distinguished author on the Continent who has not

received some honor from governments or sovereigns. It seems indeed almost impossible to escape reward. Literary distinction is generally rewarded by titles of nobility and appointments to diplomatic and cabinet stations; scientific men by public offices under the government where the acquisitions of the candidate are brought into the public service. Discoveries and inventions are even still more generously rewarded. The projectors, the chief engineers of railroads, canals, and public works, have monuments decreed to them, and receive costly presents from their imperial and royal masters. Instances might be cited, in which political offences, the last to be pardoned, have either been overlooked or generously forgiven in consideration of extraordinary merit in some science or art; and more than one criminal has been called from a dungeon where he set his ingenuity to work for the good of his king or country, to receive the favor of his sovereign.

If a work of great value is produced, which from its costliness must of necessity be too limited in its sale to pay the expense, it is certain no publisher will undertake it on his own account. It is brought before the notice of the king and printed under his patronage, he paying the expense. To this enlightened liberality have civilisation and the arts been indebted for almost every great work printed in Europe. Particularly has this been the case with the government of the Princes of Tuscany, and the succession of enlightened sovereigns who have sat upon

the throne of Prussia. In walking through the superb halls of the Library of the Grand Duke at Florence, I was particularly struck with the great number of works of this description. Nearly every work of great value or beauty there has been printed under the auspices of some generous prince. Maps, charts, designs, engravings, instruments of science and art, which crowd the libraries and galleries of Florence, would never have been brought into existence but for this reason.

I was told by Florentine gentlemen that the princes who have governed Tuscany have expended more in palaces, gardens, libraries, hospitals, public pleasure grounds, academies and institutions of learning, churches, and works of art and taste than they have expended in any other way. And these monuments now constitute the only glory of Italy—they are almost the only bright spots that relieve the deep gloom that has so long settled over this beautiful land. For them the traveller comes from a distant continent—the scholar to commune with their libraries, enriched by the lore of all times—the artist from the banks of the far Ohio, where but a few years ago he rolled, and “heard no sound but his own dashings,” to study the magical creations of genius in past centuries—the toil-worn man of business, satiated with the spirit of speculation and gain, to find repose—and the lover of pleasure to wander among the quiet, consecrated haunts of taste and beauty.

“ Nothing is more natural than that we should not know everything in ‘these United States’ ”—such were the words of the gifted Allston. Science cannot teach man all he should know. He may be learned and great, and yet not be happy. He may be rich, and never be able to reckon among his possessions what those who have, feel is worth more than gold. It is not enough for man to embark on the rapid whirl of excited life that bears the American on—to be free, to be educated, to be surrounded by luxury and have all our pleasure done at our bidding. There is something worth more than fine equipages, and *routs*, and wealth, and —even *liberty*. There is an inner life, the life of the soul, for which all else was made, and all else is only to the soul what the winds and the waves and the ship are to the voyager when his voyage is done. His wants are few and simple, and he only hopes to reach his port in safety. There is a moral life worth more than the life of the body, and for which the body was given. It lives in thought and in feeling, in all those high and generous emotions which sometimes thrill the bosom of every man. They soften the heart when we contemplate the generous and the beautiful—they elevate the soul when we gaze on the great and the lofty—they start the tear when the soul is full.

Go through a landscape garden, green all the year, and fresh with fountains, around which the sculptured marble is breathing. Enter the gallery of art, where nature seems to have been transfused with all

her pure life, and one feels he has lived whole days in a single hour. Come out from such scenes of enchantment, where the soul has held her holy communions with God and with genius, and enter a New York saloon, gorgeous, gay, superb,—in plate mirrors—in damask hangings—in Turkish carpets—in albums—in rose-wood furniture—and you can read the taste of its owner. The manufacturer's machine has more charms for him than the cunning chisel or pencil of genius. He had rather look into his Venetian mirror, than gaze on Allston's "Uriel in the Sun," or Powers' "Slave," or Cole's "Voyage of Life." That he cares more for style than art, the guest is bound to believe; for his house is a *boudoir* of fine things, and there is not a work of art in it. It bears the stamp of fashion, and does great credit to Madame, who has perhaps been *bien élevée* in the *beau monde*. But such a house is not likely to be the resort of those choice spirits who make the world bright where they go.—A word more on this point by and by.

"Unfortunately," said Powers, the other day, "in the United States a general opinion prevails, that money expended upon pictures and statues is a dead and unprofitable investment, and many regard it as thrown away, believing that all inactive investments are utterly useless, while the money invested in luxuries for the table and the person, is thought to be well spent. But it has been thought by the better portion of mankind, that everything is useful,

which contributes to their innocent enjoyment. There are many who would willingly deprive themselves of a good dinner every other day, and eat a crust, for the satisfaction of attending a concert of music—and they would feel they had made a great gain; for it would have given them an hour more in life, of exquisite pleasure, greater by far than the table could bestow. Others derive the same satisfaction in reading a beautiful book, and they have no desire to eat, or drink, or sleep, till the book is done. Others, again, derive an equal or higher satisfaction in the contemplation of pictures and statues, and works of art. Now, as the latter contain in themselves a perpetual source of happiness, and if properly taken care of, will endure for many ages, and thus contribute to the happiness of many generations, they must possess an intrinsic value, since they add so much to the happiness of mankind—the only sure criterion of real value in anything. But setting all this aside, works of art, well chosen and carefully preserved, constitute a real property, which increases in value with age as no other property does. I know many persons who have greater possessions of this kind than anything else, and although they are contained in magnificent palaces, and surrounded by the most sumptuous furniture, and might all be moved away at a few minutes' notice, yet the palace and the furniture, in comparative value, are regarded as of no account. The value of real estate is fluctuating, and depends upon variations of com-

merce, upon time, and the changes of nations ; a Revolution may sweep it away. But works of art may be easily removed from one place to another, as has often been the case. A gentleman now in Florence, made his escape from Spain with a few pictures he happened to have in his possession. All his estates were confiscated, and he saved nothing but his pictures, all of which were carried away, in a single box. On his arrival in Florence, he sold several of those pictures for more than they all cost, and those he has still, are worth more than one hundred thousand dollars."

"Other instances of a similar nature have fallen under my observation. It may be said there are few pictures in our days to be purchased, of such great value ; but it should be noted, that the best pictures in the world cost the merest trifle, when executed ; they become valuable on the death of the artist, when no more can be made by the same hand. Those of Allston, for instance, could not be purchased now for treble their original cost. Andrea del Sarto painted one of his greatest pictures for the monks of the Annunziata in Florence, for a sack of corn. For several others of his greatest productions he received less than ten dollars each. Michael Angelo was paid only \$400 for his statue of David ! It could not now be purchased for any sum. Murillo received for a Madonna, twenty-five Spanish dollars, which has since been sold for one hundred and fifty thousand. But it's important that judgment and

taste should be consulted in making purchases, and experience has shown it's safer to buy from good artists, however dear, than throw away money upon *tolerable* works, or even upon good copies."

"The custom of some of our countrymen abroad, has not unfrequently excited the sarcastic observations of foreign gentlemen of taste. Nearly all of them go for *copies*—for copies can be bought cheap, and they generally buy of those who work cheapest. With them the great thing is to collect the requisite number of pictures; and it seems to matter little what the quality be, if the quantity be made up. The eternal Madonna della Sedula of Raphael, the Madellena of Carlo Dolce, the Madonna of Murillo, the Fornarina, are purchased by all. (I was told by the Florentine painters, that more copies of these are executed for Americans than for any other nation.) They are beautiful pictures, certainly, but copies of them, as of all other works, are destitute of the great charm that belongs to an original piece, and besides, *they* are the "dead investments" of art; for they never increase in value. It is well enough to have *good* copies of these works, but they who expect to get such for the standard prices that "rule" in the shops, are sadly mistaken. I have known a copy of the *Madonna della Sedula* to be placed in a magnificent house of an American gentleman of liberal fortune, purchased for the sum of *twenty dollars*, and yet no Italian, I think, would have paid that, or even had it in his house at all.

What does that gentleman suppose will be thought of him by persons of taste in the arts, who may visit his house? In Europe, they judge of a man by his sculptures and pictures, and when they see hanging along his walls, a quantity of vile copies, and standing about his rooms, groups of cheap statues, they write him down an ass. When a man of fortune—some *nouveau riche*, buys pictures and works of art, he has the good sense in all cases to employ some adequate judge to select for him. How is it with us in America? When we go into a house, and see a quantity of books, we are apt to run over the titles, and if we find them made up of “Riley’s Narrative,” “The Pirate’s Own Book,” “Daring Exploits,” “The Dying Speech and Confessions of Jack Snobs,” “The Ghost Story,” “Charlotte Temple,” and others of a similar calibre, we instantly form an opinion of the owner, and write him down a sad cultivator of letters. The walls of such gentlemen are generally hung with “Sophias,” “Elizas,” “New York Belles,” “Boston Beauties,” “The Bride of the West,” “The dark-eyed Maiden of the South,” in yellow, green, blue, and red, and the picture becomes complete. No visitor is likely to have a much better idea of the master of the house, by any subsequent acquaintance. How, then, shall the gentleman of “the West End,” who hangs up in his halls and saloons a quantity of daubs, and mounts upon painted plaster or wooden pedestals, a lot of refuse marble images, which represent nothing

that ever existed in nature—how shall he expect to escape the sarcastic smile of every well educated man? Such people do really *throw away* their money, little though it may be. A quantity of such trash will cost as much as one or two good works, and one or two good works in a man's house from which all such vile deformities are excluded, are sufficient to establish for him, with the learned and the cultivated, a reputation for taste in the fine arts."

A few facts will illustrate the whole matter. They were related to me by an American artist in Italy. "About two years ago," he said, "I received an invitation to call on an American gentleman, at his hotel. On entering, I found two of the three rooms he occupied so crammed with pictures, that a narrow passage only was left. I was afterwards told that this gentleman had emptied two of the picture-shops, and had purchased 'the entire lots' for \$500; and yet it is certain he paid dear enough for them, although he had amassed over a hundred. After the compliments of our meeting were over, he proposed to show me his pictures, assuring me he had made some great bargains. To see any considerable portion of them it was necessary to move about very carefully, for they were standing and leaning in all directions. He passed over several without comment; but I had seen them often before, for they had stood in the windows of the picture-shops for signs, and proceeded to show me what he called his gems. I'll not speak of them all—one will be

enough, and I'll take the *chef-d'œuvre* of his collection. This he called his Correggio! and he seemed to think it an undoubted original."*

"I was disposed to laugh when I cast my eye on his Correggio, for it was one of my oldest acquaintances in Italy. The first time I saw it was in the studio of a young English artist, who told me he had bought it for two pauls (20 cents). He said the can-

* A few years ago, a painter in Rome purchased at auction an old picture, for a few pauls, and when he took it home to scrape, and prepare as a canvass for one of his own pieces, he discovered that it had been painted over another picture. He had the curiosity to examine it closely, and removing the daub carefully, exposed an exquisite picture, which turned out to be the celebrated Magdalen of Correggio, which had been long lost to the world. It had been painted over by another picture of no merit, to preserve it probably during a revolution, or some period of danger. The authenticity of this work was instantly established, and of course it became invaluable. A suit was immediately instituted by the seller, for the recovery of the picture, on the ground of an invalid sale. The litigation was carried on for several years, but it was at last decided the sale was valid. The artist was confirmed in its possession, on the condition the picture should never be taken out of Rome. The artist has long been engaged in executing a copy, with the intention, it is thought, of substituting one for the other, to get the original out of the Pontifical States. I am credibly informed that he is working under the auspices of the Emperor of Russia, who has pledged him one hundred thousand dollars, when the original shall be presented to him at St. Petersburg.

vass was good and he preferred it for painting, as it made a fine ground. 'I've been trying,' said he, 'to make something out of it, for although it's a daub it contains some valuable hints. But I've given it up as a bad job, and I think I shall paint it out altogether. Some months after I saw it again in a room occupied by several young gentlemen as a kind of domestic academy. They had all had a touch at it. Afterward one of them took it home '*to paint at,*' as he significantly said, and from that time I had lost all sight of it till I finally met it again and for the last time in this invaluable collection. The present owner told me he had got it very cheap—for a mere song, as the phrase goes—as he had paid only thirty dollars for it! or only about one hundred and thirty-three times as much as the Englishman had given for it, who had finally flung it aside. Some days after this I saw two or three enormous boxes going out of town marked 'Pictures,' duly leaded from the Custom House. They were directed to 'Mr. Swigglefitz'—(or somebody else) 'New York.' "

"On a certain occasion," says Powers, "while on an evening visit to an American gentleman, he informed me he had been making some purchases in this 'line'—but he was puzzled to choose between two copies of the Madonna della Sedula, and wished my opinion. He immediately produced them, and two greater daubs I had never before seen. 'You have not paid dear for them, I hope,' I remarked: 'Still,' he replied, 'there must be a *choice* between

them.' I told him I thought not. But he insisted on my saying which I thought the best or the worst, and to get rid of his importunity I said that the head of the Madonna in one was best and the head of St. John was best in the other. 'Well,' he replied, 'the head of the Madonna is the more important, being the principal figure.' 'Oh yes,' I could but say. 'So you approve of this, then?' for he wished to betray me into the expression of a favorable opinion of his daub to be able afterwards to say that his judgment had been commended by me. I saw what he was at, and I now told him I thought them both absolutely abominable and therefore could not approve of either. Notwithstanding all this he purchased one of them, and I think it more than probable from what I heard afterward that he said he had done it on my recommendation. This, and perhaps fifty others of the same school, which he had purchased at from two to ten pauls (for he was not a man to be taken in on a large scale) were afterwards shipped for 'the land of liberty.' This man, who was rich and wished to be esteemed a man of taste (at a small expense), put poor Clevenger to the trouble of boxing and sending these pictures away, putting into his hands about half enough to pay the expense, and Clevenger spent several days in this thankless business when he was poorly able to lose a sou of his money or a minute of his time. This same gentleman requested Louis Bonaparte to sit to Mr. Clevenger, who modelled his bust and sent him

a cast of it—but he never received even a *thank you* for it, when Clevenger considered it a *bona fide* commission. From all such patrons of the arts we unite with all pious Churchmen in saying, ‘Good Lord, deliver us.’ I would not mention this man except to mark him, for I am certain there is no other man in Boston of that stamp.*

* Such patrons of the arts are not ^{enough} rare in any part of America—but New York seems to have more than her fair share of them. Mr. Silas E. B*****, who cut a large figure among the *millionaires* of Gotham some years ago, commissioned a great picture of Mr. Chapman for the sum of \$600, paying half in advance, as all artists should require, particularly from such people. When the picture was done and sent to his house, it happened to be an inch or two smaller than the size indicated. This patron of the arts accordingly took its measure, made a nice estimate of the number of square inches wanting, deducted the corresponding number of dollars and cents, and forwarded the balance in a check. Mr. Chapman immediately sent back a check for the money paid, and a request that it might be returned. A friend of the artist in the mean time came and laid upon the table double the sum he was to receive for it, saying—give it to me. The patron seeing he was likely to lose his picture, returned a check for the full amount. This anecdote speaks well for the honor of the artist—he would not bear an insult, nor would he break his contract, although he would have been justified in doing so, and gained a large sum by it.

Another anecdote is told of this same patron of the arts. Long ago he courted a young lady in Virginia. Not making much progress in his suit he thought it might help his cause to show an act of munificence, and he began a

I have met at the *table d' hôte* of the New York Hotel in Florence, one of my countrymen of this

lofty monument to Mary, the mother of Washington—with whose family the young lady was some way connected. But the lady jilted him after all—and this patron of the arts decamped, leaving his monument unfinished. Several rich merchants and manufacturers, who clamor loudest for Native Americanism, have within twelve months given commissions to foreign artists in New York, because they work cheaper than our own—and certainly they can afford to work cheaper, for they make poorer pictures.

A specimen of vulgarity not unlike this in spirit, has recently occurred among us, on a particularly grave and solemn occasion. At the late meeting of the venerable American Board of Missions, an invitation, couched in the most respectful terms, was handed to the President, Hon. Theodore Frelinghuysen, for the members to visit, at their convenience, the Ivory Statue of Christ, esteemed by Powers to be the best representation of the Saviour he had ever seen. The President received the invitation courteously, and gave it to the Rev. Dr. Samuel Hanson Cox, to read to the assembly, combining no small share of the talent and piety of the American Church. The Rev. gentleman, with his accustomed flippancy, ascended the pulpit, and attributing to courtesy the apparently disagreeable task, published the invitation. And as he never likes to lose any opportunity of entertaining the public with his own conceits, he gave vent to his spleen by running a double tilt against a learned and highly respectable body of clergy, and against the art of sculpture. The place and the occasion should have precluded his effort at low wit, and above all, such a work as a representation of the Son of God on the Cross, should have repressed

description. He had become suddenly rich in Wall street and retired to a pleasant village in the south-western part of Connecticut (Watertown, I think)—left his wife at home, she being in too delicate health to travel (one would have thought the hus-

one of the irregular starts of the *ignis fatuus* among divines.

If such men swayed any influence among our countrymen, or in the church, we should think the day far off, when the Arts could flourish on our soil. If our country is ever to be the genial home of the Arts, our citizens—clergymen, as well as others—must be taught that they may not give vent to their malevolent impulses by trifling with the beautiful creations of genius. It was cheering to many lovers of the arts who were present to observe, that the Doctor's low joke raised a chuckle with only a few in the assembly who happened to be of the same kidney with himself, while on the countenances of the vast majority was seen a frown. Many of that assembly afterward visited the Christ, some of whom declared they could not have found time to do so, had it not been to show they did not participate in the bigotry of the attack made upon another denomination. Not a few of them said, as they gazed on the statue, that it conveyed to the mind precisely such an image of the Saviour's person and expression, as every good man would wish to have dwell in his fancy and on his heart. It gives me pleasure to say, that a similar invitation was sent to the Episcopal Convention, a few days after, where it met with a respectful and cordial response. From the Convention of Unitarian Clergymen, distinguished as that denomination has always been in this country for elegant taste and rare learning, a vote of thanks was returned.

band would have been too anxious to leave her in such a case) while he made the tour of Europe. He was evidently fully conscious of the advantages money gives its possessor, and still more conscious of his own importance. He might have sat as a model for "Low life above stairs," so profusely did he scatter his money, and so vulgar was the display he presented of low taste. *He* also was infected with a love for the fine arts, and considered his judgment infallible in all such matters. "He didn't think much of Powers' statues or busts—he thought Mr. Brown and Mr. Huntingdon knew very little about landscape or historical painting, and besides he had been able to purchase statues for \$200 instead of paying \$4,000—Landscapes for \$5, instead of \$500—an historical painting for \$10, instead of paying \$1000. In fact he had conceived a great disgust against American artists, and thought they should all be put down—they had insulted the whole world by demanding such exorbitant prices. He had sat several times for his own picture in America, but he had never got one he was willing to pay for!" (this part of his story I could readily believe)—"and he found he was obliged to come abroad, where he perceived everything was about right." "I have," said he, "*sat* for my picture here in Florence to the greatest portrait painter in the world, and he's got such a likeness of me as you never *see*. No American artist could ever do anything equal to it. And

what do you *guess* I give for it into a handsome gilt frame?"

I should have had no difficulty in making a pretty good guess, without further information; but I indulged the joke a little longer.

"Will you allow me," I said, "to ask the artist's name?"

"Oh! yes; his name is P——i—the great P——i. You certainly know him; he is the best portrait painter in Europe."

"No, I have never heard of him."

"Well, that's strange!"

"How did you become acquainted with him?"

"Oh! I have had a regular introduction to him by a gentleman I found at this Hotel—they call him the '*varlet*,' I believe. You know what a *varlet* is, I suppose?"

"No, I do not.

"Why, he is a person of leisure, who stays at a hotel and gives information to gentlemen—shows them the things of the city."

"Ah! you speak of one of the *domestiques du Place*."

"Yes; that is the name some call him."

"Have you heard any one else speak of the artist except the *domestique*?"

"Oh! yes."

"Who?"

"Why, I found a gentleman in his studio, who praised his works up to the skies."

“Who was this gentleman?”

“He was an Italian nobleman, my *domestick* said; for he spoke some language I did not understand; for this *domestick* talks English very well.”

“So it appears you have received all your impressions of the artist, through this fellow. Now I will suggest to you an idea that may throw some light on the matter. I happen to know this *gentleman* that took you to see the painter. He is paid a percentage on your picture and all others, painted for the strangers he can get into that studio. This artist, instead of being the greatest painter in the world, is one of those filthy daubers who get their living by fleecing strangers, and particularly Americans. The Italian gentleman you met at the studio, might or might not have been a nobleman. Most likely he was; for this class constitute the chief majority of the population of Italian cities;—but a nobleman who is quite useful in the arts. He is paid for puffing the artist, who gives him his bread. Now, as for the cost of your portrait, if you will tell me what sort of a frame it has, I shall be pretty well prepared to give you an opinion of the price you probably paid for it all.”

“The frame is an *antick*” (antique, I suppose he intended to say), “and it is carved in the style of the fifteenth century. I think it gives a venerable and ancient look to a picture, to put it in such a frame—don’t you?”

“Why, that depends upon the nature of the pic-

ture. An ancient portrait would certainly look well in an ancient frame; but I think a portrait of a Yankee of 1845 would look odd in a frame, evidently made in the fifteenth century. But to the point: I should judge from all the circumstances of the case, that an Italian who would get clear of all percentage and commission, would pay about five dollars for the picture; and, as such frames are plenty in all the shops of small dealers; it would probably be got for twenty-five cents. But being a foreigner and a rich gentleman, liberal withal, and there being, according to all appearances, two agents to divide with the artist, he most likely made you pay as high as ten dollars for your portrait and frame together, and perhaps more.

"Perhaps more! Why, sir, do you think me a fool?" exclaimed this Lover of the Arts, with some degree of earnestness.

"Well, sir," I could but reply, "I should think you were."

What were the facts? When the *domestique* brought me a note, after dinner, I took occasion to make some inquiry on the subject. I knew him well, and this he was fully conscious of himself. "Now, Antonio," I began, "tell me truth, and you shall have one of those new cravats you brought me home to-day; I will not reveal your confidence. What sort of a painter is Signor P——i?"

Antonio blushed a little, for he saw the drift of my question. I observed it, and repeated my pro-

mise. One good thing all travellers find in Italy—the Italian seldom doubts the word of a foreigner; for he is certain to be almost as honest as himself. “Your confidence shall not be betrayed.”

“Signore! He is the worst painter in Florence.”

“Did you tell Mr. —, the American gentleman, that he was the best portrait painter in the world?”

“No, Signor! I told him he was the best in Florence.”

“Who was the Italian nobleman in the studio?”

“*Un dolce far niente*, who gets his macaroni and oil by doing little services for the painter.”

“What did he say about the abilities of the painter, which you translated?”

“Nothing.”

“What did you tell Mr. — the nobleman said?”

“That Signor P——i was the greatest painter in the world.”

“What else did the nobleman say?”

“He asked me if the visitor understood Italian. I said no. What nation is he? American. Then, said he, I think we can manage him; he looks like a good subject.”

“What sort of a frame had this picture?”

“An old one I bought myself.”

“What did it cost?”

“Three pauls.”—(thirty cents.)

“What does Mr. — pay for his picture and frame?”

"Twenty-five dollars."

"What proportion do you have?"

"One quarter."

"And how much gets the nobleman?"

"The same sum."

"And what is the picture really worth?"

"Not a damn *Signor*."

"Very well, Antonio! there is your cravat. Now you may go."

Florence, and all the great towns of Italy swarm with such subjects. No foreigner can ever be taken to a studio of an artist or a shop, or an Hotel, or even a Café, without being compelled to pay a pretty generous commission to the fellow for his trouble. And this custom is not confined to any one city; it is universal in Italy. Let me do justice to Italian artists. There are multitudes who are incapable of resorting to such low tricks; but they always expect to make a present to the *domestique* who takes the traveller to their studios.

Nor let me intimate that we have *many* such representatives abroad as the gentleman I here allude to. But even the number of such subjects found in Europe is greater than could be desired, although it is to be hoped it will not increase. I surely need not here disclaim any allusion in these remarks to our countrymen generally met with abroad. After no little experience, I am prepared to make the assertion, that with the exception of a knowledge of foreign languages, I believe our travellers abroad

will compare in every respect with those of any other nation; and there are not a few among them who know the arts and love them, and are making acquisitions of works that would honor the taste and the fortune of European gentlemen. But I need not make any such disclaimer. In them a love of art is begotten by study and reflection, and by high moral culture—and nothing else is worthy of the name of education. And why is such education so valuable? It elevates man above his lower tastes, and begets in him beautiful thoughts and generous feelings. Where these are not its fruits, science is only a curse—for without its *morale* it only withers up the soul. I would rather be the simple Swiss peasant with no wish or hope to wander beyond my native valley, and have my free heart, and warm bosom, and gay and sweet communings with the playing brook, and the wild flower, and the valley-bird, and the mountain sunset, and never know till I die that the earth goes round the sun, than to crowd my heart with science!

And yet this is the life we know so little of in America. When a glimpse of it shines out from the books, they know not what it is, and for want of a better name they call it transcendentalism, which means nothing at all. When it peeps out from a cottage covered with woodbine, all nestled in green, where its gifted habitant lives and loves God and man and nature—its owner is pitied by his neighbor as one who has “no business.” I read a year ago

a beautiful story of the good old maiden aunt whose peaceful little cottage garden, away from the giddy world, was cut up by a dreadful railroad. The picture is as sweet as one of Claude's sunsets. The writer gave us a glimpse of a better life, and in America it was as cheerful as a gleam of sunshine through the storm. I hardly know why it is, but when I read anything of that kind I always think of the quiet vale of Grassmere, with its Rydal Mount, where the genius of Wordsworth, like the harvest-moon, has consecrated every rock and hill-peak and fell and blade of grass with hallowed light and beauty. There is one state in our Union which has been consecrated by the brightest genius and the purest and loftiest associations—there are many, but I allude to one particularly. If I have a word of censure to utter against our exclusively business spirit, that toils out life in making money, and measures public happiness by the number and extent of public railroads—a spirit that loses sight of the quiet hour of reflection in manhood, a green and a peaceful old age, and “a better life to come” (and I have a good deal to say against a spirit so uncivilized and so irreligious). I wish to except the noble state of Massachusetts from all censure; it is almost the only place in America where there is a quiet life—where the intellectual and the spiritual have won a victory over the lower propensities of man—and where one feels in the very air the spirit of the true life of man. There is many a green valley with its shining river

in that state, where all the inhabitants would not vote for a railroad—where the shrill whistle of the steam-engine would be unwelcome ; but I am aware such a spirit would only provoke a smile from almost all our countrymen, and I am not quite certain if it would not excite public pity for a people so insensible to “ the spirit of the age.” I well remember the delightful surprise a European gentleman of great taste expressed as we rode into one of those quiet villages, when he saw the church (he did *not* like its fire-brick color) standing away from the bustle of busy life, an emblem of the quiet life it fits the worshipper for—the tiny pearl-white town-house, where the citizens go to transact public business, instead of desecrating the sanctity of a Christian temple with the intrigues of the demagogue—the solemn and imposing Campo Santo, where “ the rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep”—the long avenue of venerable elms, planted by a former generation, that cast their cool shadows over half the dwellings of the villages—a green hill with its old rocks and oaks rising over the village, and the little academy at its feet—its schools, its Lyceum, its gardens, its groves, and above all, the beautiful spirit of the people.

We cut down the old forests, which are almost the only sacred things in America, for our churches are turned into town-houses “ for political purposes ;” and our grave-yards are let out for pasture, or opened for the beasts of “ the common ;” and we build churches that look just like factories,

and we get a railroad ; and yet after all, considering what is often taught in these churches and schools, and the unchristian, sectarian spirit fostered there, it is doubtful if we find so much to make us wise and good, as the pioneer finds in his solitary life in the green old woods.

If there ever was a sentiment forced on one by the universal spirit of business and gain and bustle that pervades our country, it is that striking thought of the gifted Praed :

“ Oh bitterness ! the morning broke !

• • • • •

And toil and trouble, noise and steam

Came back with coming ray ;

And if I thought the dead could dream,

I'd hang myself to-day.”

Although our continent is covered with a profusion that annihilates comparison with any other portion of the globe, and our forests are loftier, and richer, and deeper, and more solemn than any of the artificial forests of Europe, or even the consecrated groves of the ancients, yet we ruthlessly level them all with the ground. The progress of civilisation (as we have been so resolutely determined to dubb our Vandalism) has been as fatal to these old forests, as to the primeval races. In Europe the nobility spend ages in planting trees and rearing forests, and the perfection of their design and desire is to imitate as nearly as possible what we so unfeelingly destroy.

The ancestors of many of the higher class in Europe have watched for years, with the tenderest care, the slow growth of trees, which, compared with a thousand on a Western plantation, would appear insignificant; and yet no treasure could purchase them. The owners would almost as soon obliterate their family tree, for a history belongs to them all; they tell of times gone—and each one is a romance; and when the proprietor takes his friend over his grounds, he tells him the history of every tree.

“Is there anything more sad,” said Powers, “than the sight so continually presented to the traveller in America? When he rides over a plain, he sees some tall elm, too great for the axe, that has been girdled and undermined, like an impregnable castle, still throwing its long thin shadow over the desolations of a thousand companions smoking around his feet. How common a sight in the West, in coming out on a ‘clearing,’ to see far from the road, in the centre of an immense field, whose dreariness is relieved only by charcoaled stumps and girdled trees, with here and there a stack of corn-fodder, a large house of two or three stories, painted red, without windows, except at ‘the gable end,’ on the ground story—in short, an immense beginning of a house. It has been my lot to pass more than one stormy night in such an abode, and listen to the rattle of the clapboards, and the banging of unfastened doors, and feel the unprotected building itself rock with every blast. The children

or grand-children of that man, will, in their old age, if not before, look over that waste and cast a wistful eye towards a grove a half-mile off, and sigh over the folly of the first settler, as they begin to set out trees, which, in a thousand years, never will rival the venerable patriarchs cut down. They will not live long enough to enjoy their shade, but they hope to atone for the folly of their father, by doing a beneficent act for their children, who will sit under cool shades, and bless their labors."

"Contrast this solitary and desolate building with low embowered cottages of Switzerland, or the farm-houses of England, or the sweet little vine-covered villettas of Italy. Two or three-story houses belong to cities, where all is huddled together, and necessity and not convenience runs them up into the sky; but in the country, where there is no stricture, it is worse than folly to build flights of stairs, and pile story upon story, to bake in the sun and shake in the blast."

I well know that nations, as well as individuals, have a career to run, which begins with infancy, and finishes with old age, and that a certain analogy may be traced in the history of their developments. We are still in the flush and vigor, and heat of youth, when all is fire and impetuosity. We have not yet reached the age of thought—we have not yet found leisure for reflection. But we are emerging from the dusty heat of the race-course, and coming out upon the sloping hill-side, where the air is

pure, and the landscape smiling. A few have already learned the great secret of happiness—the object and the charm of life. It is singular, too, that many of this class are the very men who have been the victims of the American spirit—business men, who were diverted from study in youth by the golden dreams that enthrall so many of the choicest minds in our country. They entered the contest—they mingled in its heat and fury, and they were at last compelled to leave the field, exhausted, worn-down, tired out, sad, too, with the thought that the charm of life was broken. Some of them are able to retire with ample fortunes, but too generally is it true, that the American never abandons his business till his business abandons him; and so far has this spirit overcome the better sense of our citizens, it is even considered dangerous for a man to retire from active life—everybody says he will die! And I believe there is some truth in it too; but how sad a commentary does it offer upon our system of life—a system which turns man so entirely into a machine, that reflection kills him! And the poor victim of toil is obliged to toil on, and work himself into the grave, to keep out of it, through that very period of life nature has consecrated to the hallowed pleasures of retirement and reflection. It is a dreadful spectacle to see the poor victim's overtaken muscles still strained in the counting-house, and along the marts of commerce, when he should have long ago fled to some quiet retreat, among the green fields and dash-

ing waters, and still woods, and magical gardens, to survey the journey of life he had travelled, and pass a green old age of tranquillity, in getting ready for the beautiful life to come.

A sight still sadder, and more often met with, is such a man in the evil hour, when the fever of gain drove him into one more speculation that swept him to ruin. He is too old to begin life again at the bottom of the hill, and he retires to the bosom of his destitute family to die. They have been brought up in luxury, which is certain now to make them still more wretched; and they live only to mourn over the folly of a father, who had not given up the hazards and the cares of business, when he had amassed wealth enough to make them all as happy as money ever can make us. But the greater proportion left business with but a fraction of what they might once have retired on, had the fatal charm been sooner broken. They counted their means after discharging all their obligations, and regulated their expenses accordingly. With proper economy they could still be independent, and with a small farm to cultivate, they found sources of pleasure in nature, in society, in books, and reflection, they never dreamed of before.

To some men of this kind we are indebted for many of the best contributions to our Magazines and Reviews, and society owes to them some of its brightest charms; for no man's conversations are so enriched with maxims of mature wisdom as those

of one who has bent before the blasts of adversity ; no one's spirit so chastened as his who has grown wise by its teachings ; no one's heart so generous as his who has felt how unstable are all things human.

It has been my good fortune to meet many men of this stamp abroad ; they had some of them ample means for travelling, others could live in Europe by making sacrifices, and they were willing to forego every luxury, to be able to wander over the consecrated plains of the Old World. How deeply such men feel all this, may be judged from the words of one who passed some time under my roof. He had begun life as all Americans begin to live—like a candle in the night-wind, which does not burn brightly and steadily away, but consumes itself in its own wild flames. He was all enthusiasm, all feeling. Drawn into the rapid current, he knew not where it was bearing him, till it was almost too late to save himself. At last he woke ; he abandoned his pursuits, and tried to break up his old associations by travelling through the length and breadth of the country. But everywhere he found himself surrounded by the wild workings of that heated, crazed life, that burns from the St. Lawrence to the forests of Arkansas. He had now come to Italy, to find repose. “I did not,” said he, “come abroad for a change of climate—one climate is as good as another for a man whose disease is in his soul—his mind—his passions. But I came abroad to get away from that dreadful steam-life we all lead there.

This was what had killed me, and I believed its opposite would bring me to life. I had not been two days in Genoa before I found all I had believed was true, and began to realize what I had hoped for. I am recovering from that death-like exhaustion that followed the excitement of years, when my fever had not had a quiet day to cool off. And now that iron girdle that has so long bound my brain is giving way, and my blood once more begins to glide smoothly along its channels, as it did before I knew what care was. Nor can any one in this world tell either how sad or how happy I am. I am ready to smile or to weep every time I look out of my window, or think of my past life. I feel like a sailor who has escaped from a shipwreck, when he begins to recover from his fatigues and his dangers, and looks off on the wild ocean, whose ragings cannot reach him. I dare not read even an American newspaper—I hardly dare talk to one of my countrymen, for fear I may once more begin to think, and dream, and live in that *fire-world*. When I think of America, it seems to me like some vast battle-field in the dim distance, where I can faintly distinguish the shock of ten thousand squadrons, and see the dust and smoke rolling up heavily into the lurid sky, and I never wish to mingle in it again. When I entered the ship to sail to Europe, I was twenty-five years old. I had no disease the physicians could name, and yet I was broken down, worn out. I felt as though I had lived a century. I could hardly walk

up the ship's ladder, and my friends said I was going to Europe to die, and every one I passed seemed sad when they looked at me ; and yet I was born with an iron constitution, and I had never been ill enough a single day to keep my room. I was not five-and-twenty, and yet I was worn out, and supposed I must die."

" All I wanted was rest, quiet, peace—words we know not the meaning of in America ! We have a noble government, a noble country, a noble people ; all, all is good but this dreadful waste of life—this soul-tiring damps it all. I was thinking about it this morning as I took an early walk through the Doria Gardens that look out on the sea. The sun's early light was flaming on the sharp peaks of the distant Apennines, and the city was beginning to wake from its sleep ; but so slowly, so calmly, that when the sun had been up an hour, I could hear only the subdued hum of active but not excited thousands. I remembered that terrific roar that woke me every morning in our American cities, and the difference was that of the April shower and the August thunder-storm. That is the life that wears us out at home : it drives the young man through college and into a profession at the age of twenty-one ; and five years at the bar, in the pulpit, or in the counting-house, and he is broken down. This is the life that fades out our wives, and gives them at thirty a languid, pallid, careworn look a European woman seldom gets, and never till late in life : this is the

life that makes and breaks a thousand banks in half a generation ; that makes millions rich and poor again the same year ; that brings on commercial panics and convulsions : this is the life that makes our soirées boisterous and noisy as our political meetings ; that exiles quiet from our social and domestic life, and infects every scene of home, and family, and friends, and society, with the *business, the dollar spirit*. How few of our countrymen know how much they lose—how few know how much life might be made worth !”

After a few weeks the healthful glow had come back to his countenance ; his constitution was elastic, and recovered from the heavy pressure that had so long weighed it down, and in the quiet of the old world he found rest for his spirit, and began to live the only life God made us for on earth. This is the great lesson the American can learn in Europe, and to acquire it he would buy it cheap if he were obliged to swim the Atlantic. From the political systems of the old world we can gather much for warning, but little for imitation. They had their origin in the feudal age, and they still breathe the feudal spirit. But as there is a conservative principle in nature, which by some mysterious process works out the purification of its own elements, so in the very constitution of the political and moral world unmixed evil cannot long continue. This is strikingly displayed in the present state of Europe, where the economy of life is far better understood than with us.

Her scholars study more intensely, and accomplish far more, and live far longer than our own. Her professional men run a longer and brighter career. Her commercial men amass greater fortunes, and lead a life of less toil. Her women live in society, and seem never to grow old, for they are always young with cheerfulness. Why is all this?

If the enigma were to be solved by a single word, I should say—*Amusement*. Every European, even the slave classes (I do not speak of England), has his hour or moment of diversion, of relaxation, of *dolce far niente*; all of which is as necessary to perfect health of body and mind as sleep, or food, or rest. The merchant goes from his counting-house at 2; reposes himself in his private cabinet or library; dines at 4; rides out into the country with his family, and devotes the evening to society or amusement. The scholar, the professor, the artist, the clergyman, all abandon their occupations after a certain hour of the day; and till the next morning, all thought, all talk, all solicitude about their affairs is banished. For the rest of the day they are men of leisure and of society. A walk, a *soirée*, an opera, a card party, a concert, anything that makes life bright and the heart glad.

Such is the life the experience of two thousand years has taught the old world; and although, in making its way into our social system in America, it must battle against the giant spirit of business and gain on one side, and the narrow spirit of religious

bigotry on the other, yet it is appearing among us. An influence has gone forth from the lives and the voices of such men as Channing, Everett, Webster, Bancroft, Prescott, Allston, Vanderlyn, Longfellow, Story, Sparks, Emerson, Bryant, Halleck, Clark, Cooper, Willis, Morris, Drake, Kennedy, Paulding, Irving, Legaré, and I might mention a hundred others—an influence which is working its healing way through the feverish veins of society. It is already strongly developed in the change of hours of business, and the arrangements of commerce—in the increased numbers who pass their summers at watering-places and in tours of pleasure—in a relaxation of that narrow selfishness which branded a love for intellectual and social amusement as impiety and sin—in a wide and general diffusion of a love and patronage of the fine arts*—in a taste for horticultural

* More works of art have been bought in Europe and commissioned at home, within five years, than ever before, perhaps, in the history of the nation. There are many of our own citizens who have a lofty appreciation of Art, and are willing to expend large sums in advancing it. The artists of this country never will forget the lamented and beloved Carey, who, I am credibly informed, has paid and given away, for the Arts, more than one hundred thousand dollars. J. Robb, a poor Yankee boy a few years ago, and now one of the richest men in New Orleans, has expended within five years, over fifty thousand dollars. A little while ago he gave commissions at one time for fifteen thousand dollars. He went to the sale of the Bonaparte pictures at Bordentown, and purchased the

ture, landscape gardening, and the life of the villa, with its repose and elegant and noble amusements—in a better taste for architecture, and fountains, and pleasure-grounds, for cemeteries and monuments—in the vast increase of the numbers of our countrymen who are coming to Europe and going back Americans—in the cultivation of a home feeling and a national spirit—in our literature, our celebrations, and our jubilees*—in a single word, in the de-

best works sold there. He was prepared, I was assured by a friend, to have expended a hundred thousand dollars, if he had found the great works of art there, all persons were led to expect, from the noise made about it. But it appears, that while the young Prince was filling the papers with his choice works of the old masters, and talking about Napoleon's private Cabinet, he had privately shipped off to England all the really valuable works in the Gallery. And we were congratulating ourselves to think what glorious times we had reached, when Raphael, and Titian, and Rubens could be sold at auction in the United States! He may comfort himself with the fact that J. Robb (at least one rich American) was as ready to spend as much money for a good picture, as a rich lord. This trick was discovered, and he paid for it dearly, if honor be worth keeping.

* In a notice of the Reports of the Berkshire Jubilee, transmitted to me in Europe, I perceived some things that were a departure from the home-bred nationality of the occasion. It was expected that the Yankee spirit would enter into the web and woof of everything that should be said and done. But there were some unseemly patches of foreign drapery tacked on to the fair face of the Jubilee,

velopment of that love for society, for those liberal and elegant pursuits and pleasures which constitutes

which made an incongruous mixture with the raciness of the Berkshire spirit.

A certain *clique* in Stockbridge, smitten with the love of foreign manners, levied contributions for this honest Jubilee, from the Theatres of Europe. They called out for a speech from a European Tragedian, and they thought the gentleman had placed the Jubilee under a load of obligation by his praises extorted (as Dickens' soft words in his soft speeches) by the courtesies of the occasion. A long and tedious poem, also, by an actress of the European stage, who had libelled the country that paid her family debts, was inflicted on the sons and daughters of Berkshire, read by a gentleman, who modestly pronounced the author to be a lady of foreign *beareth*.

These matters gave high offence to many of the Berkshire throng, who had come up to that great Festival, with hearts beating high with love for their fresh hills and valleys. The clique managed to make foreign stage-players exclude some of Berkshire's most gifted sons. The feeling of disgust and indignation flowed deep through the bosoms of many of the assembled multitude, and prompted the inquiry why it was that *foreign actors* should be paraded upon *such* a stage when the curtain was raised for their own true sons, who had descended from their distant eminences of fame, to bend their feet in reverence once more before their ancestral altars. It was considered an outrage to the sacredness of the place, when such men as the Rev. Dr. Eddy, and other eloquent and conspicuous sons, were pushed aside to make room for foreign stage-players, on ground marked with the foot-steps of Sergeant, Woodbridge, and Edwards.

When Berkshire men and women cannot touch the soil

the great and only charm of the social life of Europe.

But how has it been in times past, and to how great an extent even now does this spirit prevail ? And how far have the Government fallen behind the people ?—Two points that borrow their force best from illustration.

The two most distinguished painters we have ever had, have been offered commissions only when they were too old to execute them ; I need not say that I allude to Allston and Vanderlyn. As early as 1811, Allston's "Dead Man raised by Elisha's Bones," gained from the British Institution, where he entered into competition with the best painters in Europe, a prize of two hundred guineas. His exalted genius won the palm from the nation which has conceded to us nothing she could withhold ; and this prize was awarded the very year the most popular and powerful of the British journals were arousing that deep-seated malignity which broke out into the hostilities of the last war. The elegant lovers of art in England cared little, however, for all this. "Jacob's Dream" went into the gallery of the Earl of Egremont ; "Elijah in the Desert," adorned the li-

of Europe without wishing to kiss it, or for a few weeks, travel its countries, overshadowed by filthy aristocracies, without losing their national feeling, to say nothing of their *democracy*, they should have little to do with shaping the transactions of a Jubilee among the descendants of the Puritans.

brary of Mr. Labouchere, of the British Parliament ; "Uriel in the Sun" was purchased by the Marquis of Stafford ; and I know not how many other beautiful creations of his pencil became the gems of foreign *amateurs*. While he was in the full vigor of youth and the glow of creative genius, Congress seemed to be as unconscious of his merit as of a man yet unborn. But they discovered their mistake, as is so often the case with public bodies, when too late to correct it. He was offered a valuable commission by the government when too late to accept it ; and he declined it, I am told, in an eloquent and affecting letter to the Secretary of State ! A document which will one day be pointed to by the historian as a sarcasm too bitter for any country but our own—a country which produces many great artists, but starves them all out of it ; a practice more cruel than that of the vulture, for she only *devours* her young.

Vanderlyn was offered a commission at last, and he is now engaged upon it at Paris. I have heard it spoken of in the highest terms, and I have been also told of the bitter regrets of that great man that it had not been offered to him "before his sight grew dim, and his hand began to tremble." The picture will, I doubt not, still show the pencil that painted the "Ariadne," and "Marius amid the ruins of Carthage." Such a spectacle is more melancholy than was the sight of Walter Scott's mind in ruins. We are told that during the visit he made to Italy in the decline of life, with the hope of recovering from the

shock that broke down his constitution, he was invited to preside over a meeting of Savans. The spectacle of the Great Wizard of the North staggering under the dark eclipse that fell on him from the grave was too sad ; the Savans wept, and his friends led him from the room. But a sadder spectacle by far is presented in the fate of a great genius who has been neglected by his country till his keen eye has grown dim ; but who, although he had thrown his cunning pencil aside, to paint no more, takes it up at the tardy call of a repentant country, and tries to rally his strength for a last effort, which will perpetuate his name with the marble pillars of the capitol ; like the old battle-horse of the Black Prince, who heard the trumpet call, and broke out of his stall—to die. We hardly know whether to rejoice over this late justice of our government to Vanderlyn, or to regret it. If the work be even superbly done, it certainly cannot be the work he would have made twenty years ago ; and it will cost too much pain and effort to the brave and beautiful spirit that creates it. If it be ill-done it will do injustice to the genius of Vanderlyn, and be too bitter and lasting a dishonor to his country.

When the great Thorvaldsen went home to Copenhagen to die, after his myriad creations of grandeur and beauty, he was received with the thunder of cannon along the coast, and processions and *gala festas* bespoke the general enthusiasm. He was greeted back to his country with the honors decreed

to a Roman Victor, and became the companion of his Sovereign. When he died, the king conducted his funeral. He followed him to the grave uncovered, as chief mourner, attended by all his Court; and with his own hands he helped lay the great sculptor in his tomb. There were public demonstrations of grief, and the court and the city went into mourning.

As great a genius was Washington Allston; and his works, although not as numerous, display as high an order of talent. He was gifted with a poetical genius, Coleridge once remarked to Campbell, so the latter told me, unsurpassed by any man of his age!

When Allston died, who had had a few friends who not only appreciated his genius, but showed their sympathy in a more substantial way; these friends, who had not forsaken him while living, gathered around him when he came to die; and their example was followed by a numerous funeral train, as is always the case when it is too late to do any good. And there he lies, for aught I know, without a monument, or the prospect of any worthy of a genius, who, when taste is improved, and a love of the Arts developed in our country, will gather thousands to the spot where he lies; and the foreigner who looks about for the colossal pile over his dust, will, in its absence, turn to the artists of the nation, as he points to his resting-place, and say:

“In yonder grave your Druid lies.”

Allston was appreciated by the few ; but any one who should have suggested that his death was a national calamity that called for demonstrations of national sorrow, like those exhibited by the Danes, of that ice-bound coast, to their Thorvaldsden, would have most likely been met with a reply not unlike the following : “ Why, a body would suppose the President of the United States was dead !! ” Ages will roll by, and the wild flower, and it may be the wild briar grow over the grave of the great Poet-Painter, and a long succession of Presidents will come, and men enough will be found without hunting for them to fill that post ; but ages may yet go by before the successor of Allston appears !

But our children will one day build the sepuchres of our prophets, though their fathers killed them.

Your true —, &c.

LETTER X.

Florence, —, 1845.

DEAR —,

WHEN I entered Powers's Studio this morning, I found the Sculptor a little disturbed. He had received a visit from two American gentlemen, who had been *handling* his Eve!

"The Florentines," said he, "and, indeed, the Italians generally, whatever other vices they may have, rarely disturb any work of art. They know such things are made to be seen, and not to be handled, and although I have been seven years acquainted with them, and watched them in the public exhibitions and galleries, I have never known one of them put his finger on a picture or a statue. They can tell an Englishman or an American by the practice many of them have, of *handling* everything in the form of a work of art. 'Quello é un Inglese, o un Americano' (That is an Englishman or an American). The guards notice this propensity in travellers from these two countries, and they follow close on their heels through the galleries, to protect works of art from injury. I have been obliged to put upon the door of my Studio, a notice, selected

from the writings of the sage Dr. Franklin, somewhat paraphrased, to suit the circumstances of the case :

‘ All ye who come this curious art to see,
To handle anything must cautious be :
Lo, this advice we give to every stranger,
Look on in welcome, but to touch there’s danger.’

And yet, in spite of this very broad hint, there are many visitors who honor my Studio with their presence who will handle the busts and statues. An English lady the other day, after handling a clay model till her fingers were bedaubed with dirt, went and bedaubed several of my busts with them; and she was the daughter of an English baronet!

“ But perhaps this vulgar practice is more common with a certain class of Americans. I have known some of my countrymen to flourish canes about my works, and I have trembled for the ears and noses and fingers of my statues and busts while this was going on. Some I have been obliged to speak to, for I really dreaded that a careless and stupid blow would destroy the work of months. Some have deliberately rubbed their hands, with or without gloves, all over the marble of finished statues and busts; not knowing probably that if many were to do so, such works would soon be unfit to be seen, and indeed be ruined; for the hands exude an oily substance, as any one may know by rubbing his finger, however clean it may be, upon a surface of glass, where it will leave a mark which will come off only by

washing. But oil cannot be washed out of marble ; it penetrates, and can be removed by no process. Although a single touch of the hand when clean may not leave any traces on the marble at first, yet in a few days the oil deposited will accumulate the dust, which, if you attempt to rub off, will rub *in*. A few repetitions of this are enough to ruin any work in marble that is not polished. These matters are worthy of the attention of our countrymen who go abroad. Tell them that all people of taste and all lovers of the arts in Europe are sure to set down the man who does such things as a boor or blockhead. Is it not enough to gratify the eyes by looking at a work made only to be looked at ? Why handle it ? And what gratification is there in bedaubing works of art which have cost such infinite toil and study ?*

* It would be well, indeed, if people were satisfied with *handling* works of art. How often do we see a disposition to deface them ! The Architect of Mr. Bellows's church, in Broadway, finds it impossible to complete his design. First, those beautiful heads in alto relievo, under the entrance, were painted ; then their noses were knocked off. The beauty of the sculpture was no guarantee—even the sacredness of a Christian Temple was no protection to those exquisite emblems. In almost any town in Italy the traveller may see statues and monuments in the *Piazas*, and at the corners of the streets, which have stood unharmed, even to a finger, for ages. Any work of art is considered safe anywhere. Crowds gather around them, but not a hand is laid upon them. They are never defaced. But a work of art in this country, and more par-

“I have been often asked, not only by my own countrymen but by others, for permission to be present while I was modelling from naked figures, but I never allowed this more than once, and that was in a case where I believed it would gratify a laudable curiosity and an artistic love for the arts. That this may often be the case, I have no doubt; and it is natural to suppose that such a person would find a greater gratification in seeing a model chosen by the sculptor because of its exquisite beauty. I had thought I would never depart from my rule, and for a long time I did not; but at last a case occurred of

ticularly in England, is in danger of being defaced and ruined, unless it is kept out of sight. On and around all the works of art of the Capitol at Washington, one finds pencil-marks, names scratched, bawdy designs drawn, and these things are so common, they must be attributed to a common cause—that is, a vulgar taste! In this respect, the Italians are superior to the world. However poor or ignorant an Italian may be, he is sure to feel a veneration for all that is beautiful, and he would as soon commit sacrilege as deface a statue! But we cannot complain of the many, when they have such examples from the few. When educated persons must handle statues and pictures, the ignorant will deface them, and break off their noses. It should be a matter of solicitude, with persons of taste. How are we ever to be brought to that high standard of taste and cultivation which Athens reached, in the days of Praxitiles, and the Italians in the times of Raphael, unless the masses are taught by the few, to feel a veneration for all that appeals to the taste—for everything which furnishes the element of high and beautiful thought?

the kind I have intimated, and I made an exception ; but I paid dearly for it in my own deep mortification. The person said he wished only to sketch the form of the model as an artist ; but what did he do, but stare at the poor girl during the whole sitting ! I perceived her embarrassment, and cut short the time, and allowed her to leave. Then I made a resolution never to allow another disinterested person to be present on such an occasion. I had not, then, heard of an instance of the abuse that may be made of such permissions, which occurred in the Studio of a young artist in Rome, who yielded to the solicitations of three young *gentlemen*, to be permitted to see the model who was standing for a picture he was then engaged upon. One or two of these gentlemen could draw a little, and in order not to embarrass the girl, it was understood they should make sketches of her. But they soon laid aside their sketches, and began to jest at the expense of the model, and practise familiarities, in spite of the remonstrances of the artist. The girl could not understand English, but she understood the language of insult and vulgarity, and enraged, she seized up her clothes and hurried away, declaring she would never subject herself to such insults in that place again.

These gentlemen called on me afterward, when they visited Florence. I was not in at the moment, but when I entered the Studio a few moments after, I found them in high mirth at some vulgar joke one of them had uttered.

“‘Mr. Powers,’ says one, ‘we have been criticizing your figure here of the Eve, &c.’ I did not like their appearance or behavior, but I determined to be civil towards them, and I begged they would have the goodness to tell me what objections they had found to my work; for I am always glad to receive the opinions of critics and persons of taste, whoever they may be. The reply was of such a nature as forbids my repeating it, even to a man. I was not surprised at this, for it accorded with the opinion I had already formed of them, and I said: ‘I am extremely sorry, gentlemen, that you have been able to find anything in my statue calculated to produce the reflections you have uttered. For I hoped there was enough purity and delicacy about it, to elevate the spectator’s thoughts to higher and more chaste reflections.’

“They soon left my Studio; but it was not till they had gone, that I discovered upon the statue traces of a pencil, which showed that they had been able to associate with all that is pure in the soul of Eve, as she came from the hand of her Creator, all that was vile that has come from hell! These were Americans! but unworthy the name. And I thank God they are the only ones of that very low stamp it has been my fortune to meet abroad.

“Some time after this, a dandy-looking Englishman, with corkscrew moustache sharpened out with pomatum, asked me, as we passed each other in the

street one morning, at what time I usually worked from models.

“ ‘ Usually at ’—a certain hour in the morning.

“ ‘ Well,’ says he, ‘ I will come in about that time, and see how you get on.’

“ I bowed to him without making any reply. But he came the next day, and was informed that neither I nor my model were ‘ at home.’ The time he occupied in quitting the premises is hardly worth mentioning.

“ One of the best models I have ever had I happened to meet with in the following manner. Her mother called on me and said she had herself been a model to Bartolini when young, but she was now too old. She had a daughter highly qualified to stand as a model, and she wished me to employ her. Thinking this might be a trick with a view to enhance the value of her daughter’s personal beauties, I asked her a few questions. The answers soon convinced me her story was true. They were very poor, and lived by making artificial flowers. This gave them barely their bread ; and the mother said she came to me to offer her daughter as a model, because I was a foreigner, and she did not wish it to be known among the Italians that her child had adopted that profession. I endeavored to dissuade her from her purpose, telling her it was better to suffer many privations than permit her daughter to pursue such a course of life. She said she was compelled to do so by necessity ; that she must call all

her resources to her aid ; and her daughter's form being worthy of the study of a sculptor, she could not see her suffer. She said she had perfect confidence in her integrity, and if I would not consent to employ her, she must find some one that would.

“ I had occasion for a new model just then to stand for my Slave ; and the assistance I could thus afford to render the family would be of great service to them, and perhaps prevent the degradation of the poor girl, at least for a time. I would gladly have relieved them from their necessities by a gratuitous donation, but it was not in my power to do so. All I could afford, at that time, was the sum I must pay some one, for my model, and she came accordingly.

“ The moment I glanced at her form, I saw the description her mother had given of her was no more than the truth. She was nearer the ideal than any one I had ever seen. She was modest and well-behaved. This was several years ago. She has stood for me a great many times, and I have no reason to doubt she is still a virtuous character. She has since stood, in some instances, for other artists ; but she is always, I am told, accompanied by a friend, and I hear good reports of her, wherever she goes.

“ The morning she stood first for my Slave, I noticed she appeared feeble and unable to support herself in the position in which she had been placed. I asked

her if she was ill. She said she was not. It then occurred to me, that, perhaps she might be hungry.

‘Have you taken your breakfast?’ I asked.

‘No, Signore.’

‘Why not?’

‘I have nothing to buy bread with.’

‘Has not your mother breakfasted?’

‘No, Signore! She has nothing till I go home.’

This touched me a good deal, and telling her to rest herself awhile, I went out and soon returned with a loaf of bread and a tumbler of wine, and continued my work while she was eating the loaf, which she did in an inconceivably short space of time; for I soon heard her say, as she re-mounted the platform, ‘Sono pronta, Signore.’ The bread had vanished, and most of the wine. There was a very perceptible change in her form after this. But thinking of her mother at home, I made a short sitting, and told her to go, and return the next day at the same hour.

She continued to stand for me during the time I was at work on the Slave; and I need not say, that, having now something to live upon, she improved in her form; for before this, her proportions were defective on the score of leanness: for beauty has as much to do with food as refinement of proportions.

I dare say that some of my countrywomen might feel disposed to blame me—indeed, all artists—for allowing young women to stand for models; but it should be remembered, that without nature, there can be no art, any more, than there can be surgeons

without subjects. When a limb is broken, the same people, who blame the doctor for dissecting dead bodies, are very glad to get him to set the broken member; and they expect him to know all about the matter, and blame him if he does it badly; at the same time they would withhold from him the means by which he can alone acquire the knowledge to do it. So in art; they who criticise a statue or a picture, to praise or blame it, would withhold the only means by which it can be executed in good taste or natural beauty. But the grand difficulty on this subject lies in the corruption of taste, which has become so widely diffused through the world. We see the most striking evidences of corruption of all pure taste and natural feeling, in the reign of fashion. Some years ago nothing was more fashionable, than what was called the Grecian stoop or bend. This fashion may be, in some manner, traced to Thomson's celebrated lines upon the Venus de' Medici.

* So stands the statue that enchants the world,
So bending, tries to veil the matchless boast,
The mingled beauties of exulting Greece.*

The position in which American belles used to, and for aught I know to the contrary, do still carry their bodies while walking, is called the Grecian bend; but it is a sad misnomer, for it has most certainly, no affinity with anything Grecian I have ever seen. If it be intended to imitate the attitude of the beautiful statue in the Tribune, it is a dreadful mistake;

for there is no resemblance to be traced between them. The back of the Venus de' Medici is curved forward at the waist; below that it stands erect; whereas, the Grecian bend of Broadway makes the back sink in at the waist, and throws out the *bustle* to a ridiculous extent. I have seen capital caricatures of this Grecian bend, of French manufacture. I say caricatures, but they were too like the truth to be called so. They were the very thing. They showed off a young lady in the attitude of saluting a person, in the most killing manner. A Parisian small bonnet, a muff in her hands, or her hands in a muff, just as you please,—but the artist had probably forgotten the rest of her apparel, and no bustle was needed to make the idea complete.

Correct views of art would remedy all these extravagancies, and bring us back to nature—to our own natural gait and natural form. I wish, for the edification of our countrywomen, they could see a Florentine peasant-girl under her broad Tuscan flat, attired in a simple and becoming dress, walking through the streets of New York, by the side of an exquisite of the female gender. It is needless to say, what would be the effect upon the minds of spectators. Her superiority in elegance, and dignity, and true grace (which is always natural), would be so great, no one could fail to perceive it. And yet these girls are not *taught* to walk, any more than the fawn, on the banks of the Ohio, to run; they walk precisely as God intended they should—free,

unconstrained. Have you ever seen a wild horse on the prairie, or a wild deer?—Teach such an animal the art of walking! Why, the idea is almost enough to make one laugh himself crazy. Little children always walk gracefully, and they would do so when full grown, if vile fashion did not almost *force* them to do otherwise. This is really a serious matter. There is something more than a joke in it; it ceases, in one aspect, to be a question of taste even, and rises into one of life or death. That vulgar Grecian bend once became so much the rage in America, that, I doubt not, it has absolutely spoiled the forms of many thousands of American women. The stoop began in New York or Boston, and away it went to the Mississippi. Young ladies stooped at the West, at the North, and the South. In the street and in the house; in the ball-room, and in the log-cabin. What was the consequence? Why, just in proportion as this fashion prevailed, the chest was contracted and the freedom of the lungs impaired. The space nature gave the lungs to play in, was cut down, by bending; and this space was narrowed down still more by tight-lacing, which crowded up the breast and stomach, and disease was just as sure to follow, as darkness the going down of the sun. Consumption spread its ravages still more widely; and thousands no doubt went to the grave, and are now going there to pay the penalty. Bending and lacing have done more than all other causes, to destroy the health and the form of Ameri-

can women. You never see an Italian woman with this bent stooped form, and you seldom see an American lady without it. I see it here in Florence. The American women who come to my Studio, bring the stoop with them; and many of them have told me they had tried in vain to recover from it, and could not. They had stooped so long, that at last they had grown so. I am certain it would be a very difficult matter for an artist in our country to find many good models, except in faces, hands and feet. In the body, in the form, something is almost sure to be out of the way. There is no other cause to which this can be attributed. For, naturally, our American girls have better forms and more beautiful features, than any women I have ever seen. Oh! the despotism of fashion! Suppose a tyrant should invent a machine which compelled his subjects to stand in the Grecian-bend posture, or gird them up, like the corseted belle! Why, every one of his subjects would rebel. He would lose his head. And yet Republican women will allow the *Modiste* to do it, bow implicitly to her taste, and pay her roundly for the invention. And we are told by a Historian, that during the middle ages, when an edict of the Pope could dethrone emperors and kings, he had not power to do away with the fashion of wearing high turned-up shoes! His bull against fashion was sent bellowing back to Rome!

In a Republic, one would hope there was personal independence to resist the despotism of *such* fashions.’’

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LETTER XI.

Florence, March, 1845.

DEAR —,

FOR three or four hundred years, the world has rung with the fame of the Venus de' Medici. Of course, it was one of the first works of art I visited in Florence; and it is just as much a matter of course that I was pleased. But I was disappointed; I thought many of the proportions were anatomically incorrect; and yet I hardly dared to say so, for it is a dangerous business to breathe a word against a statue that is considered the beau ideal of perfection. I went to — an artist, whose opinions on a question of sculpture I should feel more confidence in than any one else. 'Why,' said he, 'since you say these things, I will give you here a scrap of paper on which I have written something about the Venus; but you shall never use it in connection with my name.'

Here is the scrap.

"The organ of veneration in the human mind is subject to the bias of early associations, of education, and of circumstances. Where it is strongly developed, there is most commonly a religious ten-

dency; but it may lead to other ends. It may cause the possessor of it to regard with feelings of awe and profound respect, any great man, but whether a great conqueror, a great writer, or statesman, depends on the bearing of other mental organs or propensities in the same individual. There are many who entertain a high veneration for old books, old pictures, old medals, old autographs, or, indeed, almost anything that is old. They care but little for anything that is new, unless it be *new milk*, or the like. Such may be called Antiquaries, but they are not so called, unless they take to some certain class of subjects, and thereby distinguish themselves from the many who are more general in their tastes.

The class of venerators of whom I now wish to say a few words, is that which has public opinion for its guide, and looks to others to point out the worthy subject to which, without any judgment of its own, it is ever ready to attach itself. This is the most numerous class of all, for it embraces many of all the others. Perhaps the best illustration may be made by giving an example or two; and I will therefore propose the Venus de' Medici, as a subject upon which this veneration operates. Thousands come to Florence chiefly to see this statue, and in the entire belief that it is faultless. They have been told so from their childhood, and they believe it as strongly as they do the Bible; nor do they expect to hear a doubt expressed by any person of sense. They even venerate the restored parts of

the statue, and are ready, many of them, with their cash, to purchase casts of the fork-like hands which are to be had at the plaster-shops. Worse formed hands or more unnatural, could hardly be found in art. Tell them that the head is too small, the eyes too low in it, the face one-sided and insipid in its expression,—that the shoulders are unequal in their diameters, the front view of the bones of the pelvis being nearly horizontal, while the sides incline to the left (as indeed they should both do),—that the right haunch is too small for the left—that the right knee is too high for the action of the bones—that the diameters of the legs, just below the knees, do not correspond—that the ankle bones are enormous, surpassing, indeed, those of the largest women—and lastly, that the right foot is much longer (or would be if straightened out) than the left, and they will first stare and then laugh at you ; but if you prove all this by measurement, they will then be struck with ‘the vast wisdom of the artist, who, in order to render the charms of the statue matchless, *purposely* made the above deviations from truth in anatomy, for the sake of the beautiful effect produced by them.’”

Having ventured to point out the faults of the famous Venus de' Medici, and fearing that I may be thought to condemn it, I will now say, most sincerely, that it is the most beautiful statue I have ever seen, and that it fully deserves all which has ever been said in its praise, except that “it is

divine," "it is perfection," "it cannot be surpassed or copied;" for it is not divine, nor can any human being ever even approach, by his art, the *perfection* of nature, or, in other words, *divine* forms. We never see embodied perfection in any one human form; but if we had the power we might find it (and sift from it its alloy of deformity) as it still exists, distributed among the human race. "Here a little and there a little." It peeps out from the eyes of one—it plays about the mouth of another—it sits on the arched brows and nose of a third, and you may find it in the dimples hands of youthful girls; but you look in vain for it in the feet which have worn shoes. It hates *corsets*, *tight shoes*, and all other instruments of restraint. It is the business of the painter and sculptor, to gather these beauties from the human blossoms, where they abound, even as the bee collects his honey from the garden of nature; and if they could succeed *perfectly*, their works would be *divine*, for God made man in his own image, which is divine, and at the same time truly natural. There is no surpassing nature, for to surpass nature would be to surpass God himself,—the created his Creator.

I will now say something of Canova's Venus, though public opinion has changed much in regard to it, since the death of its author. It was once thought worthy of the vacated throne of the Venus de' Medici, which it occupied in the times of Napo-

leon, but it has since been removed to the Pitti Palace.

I will begin with the head, the facial angle of which approaches that of the monkey. The distance between the organ of self-esteem and the chin, is extravagant, and without a parallel in any head of a great statue of the same size I have ever seen. The eyes appear in an eclipse, so high do the under lids rise upon them. The nose is long and hard in its lines, and the upper lip so very short that it amounts almost to a caricature upon a short upper lip. The expression of the face is even more insipid than that of the Venus de' Medici. The hair appears to have been arranged by some French hair-dresser, and it is badly executed, being stiff and hard in its movements. But the most extraordinary thing about the upper part of this statue, is the extreme degree to which the head is turned to the left. It has actually performed that most difficult thing to do in nature, by a man or woman, namely,—to place the head at right angles with the front view of the chest. Let any one try to look directly over the left shoulder, and what I mean will be soon understood. Such a position of the head is most painful, and nothing but some violent agitation, such as fright, anger, or despair, would justify it in a statue or picture.

The shoulders, arms, and bosom, are beautiful, but the hands are faulty, particularly the last joints of the fingers, which are so small as to leave no

room for flesh over the bones. This makes the tips of the fingers (which are enlarged) look like little feet, of some kind. There is much beauty in the back and legs, but the ankles and feet are caricatures of the Venus de' Medici's. Altogether, this statue has a graceful appearance, but it does not compare with its Greek rival. In all I have said of these two celebrated statues, I have duly considered the effect which their attitudes have on their forms and measurements, for I know how important this is to the formation of a correct judgment.

Some may say that my observations on these statues are too practical, and that I ought to give more latitude to the *ideal*; but truth and nature (which last, by the way, is truth also) form the only foundation for art, and the works most admired by the world are *all based upon the truth*. The more truly beautiful a statue or picture is, the more truly is it natural.* To make this observation well understood, I will explain it. Suppose, then, that there are before you fifty persons in a row, and at one end a man in every respect as beautiful as the famous Apollo, at the other end a person thoroughly deformed; and all between verging to beauty in successive degrees as they near the first, and to ugliness as they approximate the last—so that the two first and the two last are within a fiftieth part of being equally beautiful or ugly: now suppose again that the first

* Deformity is unnatural, it being the result of causes which have obstructed nature's proper course.

is perfectly natural, and the last the very opposite, does it not follow that the second from the beautiful is deformed in his degree, and so on with the others, until no trace of beauty is left. Just so do we find it in nature; some persons have bow-legs, others are knock-kneed; both are ugly according to their degrees, and so deformed: one has a hooked nose, and another the reverse. The world has pronounced the Greek nose, as seen in the Apollo and other masterpieces, the most perfect; and the Greek nose is nearly straight. Now I do not say that any deviation from straight legs and noses would be decidedly ugly; on the contrary, they might retain a great deal of beauty; but they cannot be perfectly beautiful. Perfect beauty may exist between opposite degrees of ugliness; and I have seen almost a practical illustration of it in Florence. The daughter's face was nearly faultless, her forehead slightly retreating, her nose nearly straight, upper lip short, and under one full, her chin a little indented and retreating, and the form of her head was somewhat square. Her mother's face is what is called a dish-face; projecting forehead, turned-up nose, and prominent chin. Her father's was an oval face; retreating forehead, hook-nose, and retreating chin. The daughter's face was the medium of the two, and she was beautiful, while both her parents were decidedly ugly, for their peculiarities were in an extravagant degree.

The Greeks practised upon the true theory of the human form, for they aimed at the *medium*, where

perfection has her citadel, and still maintains it. Nature points to it, and is the only guide. Our own imperfections alone prevent our triumphing over the thousand obstacles which stand in the way.

There are many who fancy that art can surpass nature, and create new beauties. As well might we hope to improve the light of the sun, add to the volume of the sea and air, invent a new moon, remodel the bones and muscles of animals, *get up* a new horse, &c., as vie with the Almighty in his beautiful creations.

I know that some will dispute the truth of what I have said above, particularly the ladies, many of whom have been flattered into the belief that they are perfectly beautiful ; but let them know that no such perfect being exists in this world, though some might be found who more than rival the far-famed Venus de' Medici ; and yet their eyes and noses *might* be improved, as well as their forms ; but the latter are not likely to be changed for the better by French stays and bustles, any more than their feet by wearing tight shoes. There are many who think that feet cannot be too small ; but this is a mistake : there is a just proportion for the feet, and those below it are as faulty in their degree as those above it."

LETTER XII.

Florence, March, 1845.

DEAR —,

WHILE I was taking my coffee, this morning, at Doney's, the polite Café of Florence, I could not escape a conversation with two Englishmen, who happened to know me, who were seated at the same table. John Bull seldom begins a conversation; and when he attempts it with a stranger, he makes a blundering business of it. These Englishmen were regular cockneys—that select class who have always two subjects for diet, and when they meet Americans, two for conversation. Roast Beef and Brown Stout for the one—American Slavery and Repudiation, for the other—both of which bloat them up in about the same degree. In some nook or corner of British dominions, they had seen a book I once took the liberty of writing, about our brethren in Merrie England; and the display they made of themselves, was somewhat peculiar for imperturbable John Bulls.

“Why, sir,” said Cockney No. 1, throwing down an English paper, and directing his remarks and

his eyes rather fiercely towards myself, "this Repudiation is a burning shame. To think you should have borrowed such enormous sums of the mother country, and then repudiate it! Oh! it is really a burning shame."

"Yes, indeed," added Cockney No. 2, "a burning shame!"

"And then," continued No. 1, "you say you have such vast resources—the States are so opulent. Think of the widows and orphans your State of Pennsylvania has made weep!"

"Yes," rejoined No. 2, "and yet I believe you pretend to honor."

No. 1 grows warm.—"What honor is there in cheating? Republicanism makes your government dishonest."

"Dishonest, indeed!" No. 2 *quite* warm. "I should think you would hang your heads in Europe, and turn your backs whenever you meet an Englishman."

"Well, gentlemen," I at last replied, with superfluous good nature the occasion hardly called for, "it is not the custom of Americans to hang their heads nor show their backs when they meet with Englishmen, I believe; so you must overlook this evidence of our want of a due sense of propriety, and be charitable."

"Oh! Bah!" No. 1, very warm, "Charity—I can have no charity for thieves. I'm the last man to feel charity for the Pennsylvanians. I've just

sold out my stock for a ruinous price. That State will never pay."

"Quite a pity you did not hold on to it a little longer, for it appears by Galignani, of this morning, that Pennsylvania has just paid her arrearages."

"Let me see it," exclaimed the ruined man, as he snatched up the paper. "Oh, h—l, I'm a fool."

"Well, I'm sorry for you," I replied, "a man stands quite in need of his brains in this world."

"Well, sir," No. 1 continued, "I will not retract what I said. That State did repudiate; and if the British Government had ever repudiated a shilling, I would never show my head out of her own sea-girt isle."

"Then, my dear sir, I would suggest the propriety of your returning to your sea-girt isle with all possible despatch. For it happens that more than one family in Florence hold to this day the bonds of a British King for an enormous sum of borrowed money, which has been repudiated by your Kings, and Queens, and Parliaments, and have been dishonored for some hundreds of years!"

"Impossible!" exclaimed No. 1 and No. 2, at once, "Impossible, by G——. Where are they?"

"A very proper question, surely. Well, then, if you go round to the Casa de' Peruzzi, the Palace of the Bardi, and the Palace of the Frescobaldi, you will find bonds given by Edward III. in security for vast sums borrowed of the ancestors of those men, by that glorious Prince. These loans were

never paid, and they never will be. Those princely merchants were utterly ruined by this robbery. Efforts and applications were made without number, but all in vain. The bonds never were taken up, nor have any of them ever been taken up: and to-day you can see them at the houses of those injured and ruined families. The interest now due exceeds the principal of the debts of all our States. Repudiation is always bad, sir; but I think this is the worst case that has ever come to my knowledge! Now, my dear sir, I would go round and see these repudiated bonds, and then hie thee back to thy sea-girt isle."

Quite a pause. "This may all be so, but there is one crime that blackens your names as Americans, and this you *cannot* reply to. You are flesh-mongers, soul-buyers, and soul-breeders. You speculate in the image of God. Oh! your cursed Negro Slavery. 'Thank God, England has no slaves. She has washed her hands of this iniquity.'"

"Yes," exultingly exclaimed No. 2, "that charge can never be hurled against Britain by her direst foe." And the two gentlemen leaned their chins upon their hands, and looked Brother Jonathan full in the face, very much as an angry terrier eyes an old rat, whom he has cornered at last, after being bitten himself in the scuffle.

"Such remarks from Englishmen and English Journals, at so early a period after the Act of British Emancipation, calls to my mind an anecdote. But

before I tell it I will, with your permission, premise a word. I wish to correct you in one respect. It is a sad mistake that England has washed her hand of this crime. There are many millions of slaves, held this very moment by British subjects in the East Indies, and they are reduced to a state of heathenism and suffering unprecedented in the annals of the world. In this I appeal to your own writers.

But passing by these enslaved millions, whose unpaid toil, and undried tears, and unstanch'd blood support the splendor of many a palace in Grosvenor Square, and many a flashing equipage in Hyde Park,—saying nothing of the many millions of poor British people at home, whose deep sufferings excite the compassion of everybody but their neighbors—let us come to American Slavery, in whose defence I will say not one word.

You are aware, probably, that to your Kings, and Parliaments, and aristocracies, are we indebted for this beautiful system. For a very long time, the American colonists remonstrated against the introduction of African Slaves. This feeling of opposition at last became so violent, on the part of the Colonists, they determined to oppose it by force. In the original draft of the Declaration of Independence, Mr. Jefferson introduced, among other grievances which justified that movement, the complaint that the mother country forced upon us, contrary to our will, African Slaves ; your good Queen Anne,

you know, let loose upon us the first company of kidnappers, and took a part of the stock herself. This clause would have stood, had it not been feared that it would alienate many rich English Planters at the South (the principal owners of slaves), whose aid in the Revolution, the Leaders hoped to gain. But let us pass by all this. What you said just now, reminds me of an anecdote I heard related the other day by a celebrated sculptor.

“There was in Gotham a woman, who had grown old in iniquity. She had, for many years, carried on a business which people generally esteem the least honorable the fair sex can pursue. She had a beautiful young daughter, whom she compelled, contrary to all her natural tastes and principles, to follow the same lewd life; this was done by force, at a period the child was too young to resist. But the mother was now growing old, and having no longer a relish for her former indulgences, she concluded to reform. She was induced to this more, perhaps, through jealousy of her daughter, who had at last left her house and taken up her quarters on the opposite side of the river (where she was getting on much better than before), than from any better motive.

“She accordingly ‘got Religion,’ washed herself up clean, to all appearances, although it was said she still allowed the same practices to be carried on around her premises, and to an extent much greater than before. But she seemed quite religious, and lost no occasion of discoursing very piously about

any knowledge. The following words can be read on his tomb-stone :

“Here lies interred the body of Mr. John Watson, who departed this life, August 22d, 1768, aged 83 years.” This stone does not tell us he was a painter, nor do any of his works exist in our times.

Dunlap, the only American who has written much about these matters, says that he was born in Scotland, and came to this country in 1715, to practise his art of portrait-painting. “He lived long in the land of his choice, and died in extreme old age.” After his death, they pulled down his house, but left his Studio standing. Dunlap saw it when a boy. “It remained,” says he, “and attracted admiration by the heads of sages, heroes, and kings. The window-shutters were divided into squares, and each square presented the head of some personage in antique costume, with beard, and helmet, and crown.”

The painter's neighbors said he was a miser. Probably the artist's business was a precarious one, and, like a wise man, he took good care of the few gold pieces that found their way into his studio—a custom that might be introduced generally among artists, without any particular injury. The old painter would not have his house re-roofed, let the rain beat in as it liked. So when he was old, and deaf, and bed-ridden withal, they began to take advantage of his infirmities. This is the fashion all over the world. His nephew, who had left the British army to go to see his old uncle well buried,

and then step into his shoes, improved the opportunity, and set the carpenters at work. An occasional hammer-stroke reached the deaf man's inner ear, and he asked the boy—

“What is the meaning of that pecking and knocking I hear every day?”

The nephew, taken by surprise, answered, “Pecking!—pecking? oh, ay! it's the woodpeckers; they are in amazing quantities this year—leave the trees, and attack the roofs of the houses. There is no driving them off.” The old painter was satisfied; he turned his face to the wall, and died. He had brought with him from Scotland a collection of paintings, said to have been real or imaginary portraits of kings who ruled in the British Islands; “And this agrees,” says Dunlap, “with the awe-inspiring, inveterate heroes we remember to have seen on his window shutters.”

The neighborhood seems to have been loyal to the British king in the Revolution; but they happened to be in the minority. “Of course the deserted Studio was left at the mercy of the undisciplined yeomanry; and the first cabinet of the fine arts founded on the continent was broken up, and its treasures dispersed, by those who probably took delight in executing summary justice on the effigies of the Nimrods of the land.”

All this may seem to be a matter of little consequence; and it is, in itself considered. So is the little rill that comes trickling out of the Rocky

Mountains; but the traveller who there drinks would almost pay homage to its crystal waters if he were told that for thousands of miles it flows on increasing its current, till it swells into the deep, solemn Missouri. And so I think we should feel standing over the grave of "Mr. John Watson." Many an artist has felt his heart beat quicker near that tombstone. The day will come, too, when our painters will hold a jubilee of art around this resting-place of the first American painter. His pictures are lost, but his influence will live for ever. Dunlap was born where Watson lived and died; and he tells us he never should have written his *History of the Arts of Design* had it not been for the painter, on whose shutters he saw when he was a boy, those mysterious heads of sages, heroes, and kings. It is strange some philosophical historian should not long ago have rendered some just tribute to the fame of Berkeley; for few persons have ever landed or lived on these shores, who have left their impression so deep upon the continent. This wonderful man was the first, of all the Old World philosophers, who saw the part America would play in the drama of the world. He had travelled over Europe, and learned its languages, and exhausted its literature. Under the mournful shadows of the Coliseum, he had studied the moral of History—

"Disgusted at an age and clime,
Barren of every glorious theme."

He turned his hopeful eye away to the West.

John Smybert, who was one of those few names that make up the golden links of all that is bright and beautiful in our History, had been his travelling companion in Italy. In that land of the Light and the Dark, the sage, the prophet, and the poet used to wander with the young painter, among the ruins of "dead empires," and speak to him of that land where the Muse should one day sing

"Another golden age."

I love to think of the Coliseum; and it stirs my blood when I recall the gladiator dying by inches, as he remembered "his young barbarians all at play," on the banks of the Danube. So, too, of the Roman Forum, with its Senator in his toga; and the shout of the indignant people, who sometimes made their voice heard in the Palace of a filthy tyrant. I have woken from my sleep when I was dreaming of Rienzi, the Last of the Tribunes. But the picture of Berkeley, sitting on the Coliseum, talking to the painter about the future glories of America, always stirs me deeper than all. I know not when he wrote those prophetic lines; but I can imagine him stopping short, in the bright moonlight, as he was walking around Rome, and stretching his hand away to the West, as he repeated these wonderful words to his painter-companion:

"Westward, the course of empire takes its way,
The four first acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day,
Time's noblest offspring is the last."

"Confiding," says Verplanck, in his noble tribute to Berkeley, "in these glorious auguries, and animated by the pure ambition of contributing to hasten forward the 'rise of Empire and of Arts,' he sailed for England in 1728."

He was inspired by a conception as lofty as Columbus himself. To find a new world, was the dream of the "world-seeking Genoese"—to illuminate it, the dream of Berkeley. He had won from a British King a charter for a great University, to be founded upon the New Continent; and to accomplish his object, he had given up the richest church preferment in Ireland. Parliament had voted nearly half a million dollars for this noble foundation. Sir Robert Walpole stole "the sacred gold" to buy jewels for a Royal Princess. The Colonies, thank God, revenged the wrong fifty years after, and fulfilled the prediction of the mortified, humane Berkeley. The sage took Smybert with him to be the Professor of Art in the new University. Nor did disappointment drive him back. The painter loved and married a Pilgrim girl. More about him and his pictures by and by.

The great Berkeley could not found his University, but he loved learning, and he gave all he had to Yale College. His Library, which President Clapp, in his History, calls "the finest collection of Books that ever came together at one time to America." His farm in Rhode Island, he gave, too; and when he sent the deed, he requested that it might be "held

in trust for the maintenance, during the time between their first and second degrees, of three students of the College, who should be found, on examination, to be most distinguished for their attainments in the Latin and Greek languages ; and in default of applicants at any time, to the purchase of Latin and Greek Books, as premiums for Latin Composition in the several classes." The long line of true men who have held that trust, have been sacred to it; and we are still told that "this farm produces about one hundred and fifty dollars a year, and the proceeds are regularly applied to the objects designated by the donor." Many a boy, who afterwards made the world brighter and better, has read these precious Books—many a poor student who made the world rich, has eaten the bread of the good Berkeley's farm, and may poor students eat that bread for ever ! I love to talk to you about Berkeley. I wish I could honor his name by something I could say. He did for our literature and our arts, what Dante did for you. But, perhaps, the best thing he ever did was to bring Smybert, the painter, to America.

Now we trace down the chain of genius. Symbert caught the inspiration of Berkeley, and in 1728 came with him to this country. He was esteemed even in Tuscany, some years before, a painter of merit. The Grand Duke had commissioned him to paint two or three Siberian Tartars, presented to him by the Czar of Russia ; and when the painter landed at

Narragansett Bay, he exclaimed, "These fellows I have seen and painted before!"

There is now in New Haven a very valuable painting, of which the world knows little, and cares less. A picture of the Berkeley family, painted by Smybert, and discovered by Dr. Dwight in one of his tours of recreation off in some obscure nook of Massachusetts. Dr. Waterhouse lent his noble aid to the poet-divine in getting it for Yale College. The scene represents Berkeley in a standing attitude, dictating to a secretary his "Minute Philosopher" at Newport, and surrounded by his family; it is a home-scene, completely a New England affair: it makes us think of old pilgrim days. Dr. Dwight said the sketch was made while painter, philosopher, and family were rocking on the Atlantic.

Smybert loved a maiden, the daughter of Dr. Williams, the Latin schoolmaster, who (honor to the Bostonians then as now for their Latin school) taught the tongue of Brutus to the boys who afterwards flung the tea into Boston harbor. Smybert did good in his time, filled nobly his mission, and died in 1751. He left an influence that every artist who ever lives in America will feel till painters paint no longer; and he left a son who was at an early age eclipsing the fame of his father. The venerable Judge Cranch, of Quincy, Mass., in a letter of August 5, 1775, says to the boy: "When I consider the ease with which your hand improves the beauty of the fairest form, and adds new charms to the most angelic face, I do

not wonder that your riper imagination should fly beyond your pencil, and draw the internal picture of your friend so much fairer than the original." Some proof of merit in young Nathaniel Smybert; and we thank the venerable judge for giving his sympathies to this boy. The poor fellow's biography is a brief one. He painted some things sweetly, made everybody love him, and then he died and went to a world where the painter's colors never fade!

A painter called Williams lived in Philadelphia about this time. He may have painted good or bad, but he did something worth remembering: he lent the works of Fresnoy and Richardson to a boy by the name of Benjamin West, a young Quaker, who afterwards abandoned the good Penn city, with its straight coats and straight streets, and threw away his Quaker coat, and went over the big waters, and lived with a king, and painted "Death on the Pale Horse," and was chosen President of the Royal Academy, and did various other things.

BENJAMIN WEST is worthy of a better biographer than Cunningham, who dipped his brush a little too deep in the paint-box of fancy; or John Galt, who is a little too puerile; or Dunlap, who is a good deal too dull. A word about this first native American painter, who was the best painter the *world* had in his times, or had had for a century, think what his own countrymen may of him now! This man, who was the pet of a British king and the toast of a na-

tion who not five years ago very soberly asked, what has America yet done for the arts (founded the first Academy of Art you ever had), was born a Quaker boy, in Chester county, Pennsylvania, in the year 1738, just ten years after Smybert landed in America.

He came of good blood (we think a great deal of good blood in horses, and why not in men?): an old ancestor of his, Col. James West, did some fighting in the field by the side of John Hampden. When Benjamin was seven years old, he was put to watching a sleeping baby one day; he drew the baby in his cradle with a pen. His sober parents encouraged him, and in no great space of time the Quaker home was filled with works of art, such as they were. Some time after this, a neighbor (General Wayne's father) took a fancy to six chalk heads the boy had made, and gave him six dollars for them. But so far he had no paints or brushes: Lewis (one of his American biographers) says his colors were charcoal and chalk, mixed with juice and berries; he laid them on with the hair of a cat drawn through a goose-quill. He got "from the Mohawk or Delaware Indians red and yellow earths used by them at their toilets; Mrs. West's indigo pot supplied blue; and the urchin thus gained possession of those primitive colors he afterwards knew to be the materials whose combined minglings, in their various gradations, gave all the tints of the rainbow." Once supplied with colors, he "got on" pretty fast.

Little Ben seems to have been an ambitious fellow for a Quaker. He went riding one day on horseback, behind a brother Quaker. The two worthies began to discourse very soberly about the mystery of life, and what they should do in the world. "This," said his companion, "is my last ride—tomorrow I shall be apprenticed to a tailor." "Well, then," said the painter-boy, who afterwards chose his companions among kings, "you may ride alone. I don't ride with tailors," and off he went.

A Mr. Pennington, a merchant of Philadelphia, made a visit to Chester County, where he saw this boy. When he returned, he sent him a present worth more than a kingdom—"a box of paints and brushes, and several pieces of canvass prepared, and six engravings by Greveling." These were the first works, or implements of art, the boy had ever seen. He copied the engravings, representing successfully by colors the light and shade of the picture. Sixty-seven years afterward, one of these copies was hung by the side of "Christ Rejected." Two of them are now to be seen in Philadelphia. His patron was so pleased, he took the boy to Philadelphia, and gave him a home in his own house. Here he saw the first painting in oil (except his own), that had ever fallen under his eye—a portrait by Williams.

There was a gunsmith at Lancaster, who was the seer of his age, and he gave him the subject of the first historical painting the artist of "Christ Rejected"

ever made. "You must paint me the death of Socrates, Benjamin."

"Socrates?" was the reply of the big-eyed boy, "I never heard of the fellow." So the gunsmith read him the story. West's eye flashed—he took the book home with him—got one of the gun-makers for his model, and he killed Socrates. This gunsmith's name was Henry—we know nothing more of him!

Provost Smith (of the College at Philadelphia) saw West at Lancaster, and prevailed upon his father to send him to town, where the Provost directed his classical and artistic studies. Before the father, however, gave up his boy to "the worldly occupation of painting," he felt it to be his duty to make it a matter of prayer. (There is not so much to provoke a smile at this business, either, as some folks may suppose. People that pray over such matters are not always the fools the world in our times takes them to be. A great many men have laughed at the Puritans; but no man ever laughed at them after meeting them in the halls of debate, or crossing swords with them on the field of battle.) So the brethren in drab came together for the moving of the Spirit. The Spirit did move, and they declared the Lord had made Benjamin to be a painter. A decision which the best painters in Europe have for a century confirmed. Yes! those old drab-coats knew what they were about.

Gov. Hamilton had a small gallery of pictures.

There was one picture in that collection that had a good deal to do with West's advancement—a Murillo (St. Ignatius) captured in a Spanish prize. At this time his price for a head was \$12,50; a full length, \$25.

He now came to New York, where he was better paid; and having, at the end of eleven months' hard work, a little money laid aside, he determined to go to Italy. A ship laden with flour was sailing from Philadelphia to Leghorn, and he went aboard of her. In a few weeks he was worshipping the genius of Raphael, as he stood, awe-struck, in the Sistine Chapel. He saw the celebrated blind Cardinal Albani, who, hearing he was a native of the New World, asked if he was a white man. "Yes." "How white?" "A considerable whiter than yourself."

It was a queer sight to the Italians. An American Quaker had come from the woods of the wild Western Continent, to study art in old Rome! When they showed him the Apollo, West exclaimed, "How like a young Mohawk warrior!"—probably the most beautiful criticism ever passed upon that wonderful statue.

Galt and several English writers have said that West's first painting in Rome was better than anything of Mengs's, who was then the greatest artist there. He stayed in Italy four years, and was regarded as the best painter in that city. He went through all the principal Italian cities, among others, to Bo-

logna, your native city, my dear Albèri, from which you were banished. In the meantime his money was gone, but while waiting in Florence for a small sum in payment for a picture he had made, he received a note from his bankers at Leghorn, saying they had orders from a company of gentlemen in Philadelphia, to give him an unlimited credit! He now returned to Rome, and painted Cimon, Iphigenia, Angelica, and Medora. "These established," says Dunlap, "his reputation as an historical painter, and obtained him the academical honors of Rome."

After four years of study and triumph in the land of Raphael, he prepared to cross the Alps, and on the twentieth of June, 1763, he reached London. Everything conspired to favor West's advancement, all through life. He could not have arrived in London at a more auspicious moment. There was not an historical painter of genius now engaged in his art, in Great Britain. Hogarth was dying, Barry had abandoned his easel to battle Rome. Reynolds painted nothing but portraits; Gainsborough and Wilson only landscapes. Before West could succeed, however, he had to create a new taste in Great Britain; for there was no country in Europe where there was at the time so little true taste in the arts. The writer of the Percy Anecdotes tells a story to the point. When West exhibited his Pyrrhus and Orestes, although crowds came to see it, not a visitor ever asked the price of the picture or

thought of giving the artist a commission. A gentleman of taste spoke one day in terms of admiration of this beautiful work. "Why do you not buy it?" said his friend. "Buy it!" was the reply of the astonished man; "why, what would the world say, if I should have anything in my house but a portrait."

And this was a fair specimen of the vulgarity of English taste at the time. Leslie says that no Englishman would have *dared* to hang up in his parlor, or even his library, any one of the matchless creations of Hogarth. "All admired West's picture," says he, "but nobody dared to buy it." But he gained the eye and the hearts of a few men of fortune and taste, and in a short time attracted the attention of the King, George III., who was his friend and patron till he died. This was the triumph of his genius, his honesty, and his independent spirit. Intrigues were planned against him—ministers and courtiers, the Prince of Wales, his flatterers and his mistresses, all plotted and counter-plotted against the American painter. But honest George III. was firm in his purpose; he still gave West commissions, still invited him to his palace, and stood by him to the last.

The Prince of Wales (afterward George IV.) was called the "finest gentleman in Europe." Leslie tells one fact to show it! While this gentleman was making some alterations in Windsor Castle, he came to a room filled with old historical paintings, whose subjects were chosen from the history of Ed-

ward III., the Repudiator!—the “Surrender of Calais,” the “Battles of Cressy and Poitiers,” &c. They were the most valuable pictures in England. But what cared he for works of art—for the history of Edward? Just about as much as the Repudiator for his debts! He ordered the pictures to be all thrown into a lumber room, to be eaten by rats! Sir Thomas Lawrence told him he could do as he pleased, but no living artist could supply their places. The king thought it might be an evidence of bad taste, to throw them away,—and they hang there still.

An English writer says, that Reynolds, the best English painter, never rose above a portrait, while West chose subjects for his pencil among the heroes and heroines of antiquity.

The Society of Incorporated Artists had existed many years, but it had been a strong barrier to the progress of the nation to a true appreciation of high art; and West determined to found a new institution. His plan met the approbation of the king; Reynolds joined with him, and the result was the Royal Academy, which is now the pride of Great Britain. To its first exhibition West sent his “Departure of Regulus,” which placed him, says Dunlap, with great propriety, “on the throne of English art.” Not long after, he painted the “Battle of La Hogue.” When he was painting this noble piece, a British admiral took him to Spithead, and sent a squadron out to sea, and put them into action,

firing broadsides, to give the painter a chance of seeing smoke roll off from a naval engagement.

West did more for high art in Great Britain than any other man that ever lived. He did what he could, too, for art and artists, in his native land. Every young painter from America who applied to him met a warm greeting, and was admitted to his Studio. Peale, Stuart, Wright, and Trumbull, are among this number, who afterward arrived at considerable eminence in the art. He has never been properly appreciated by Americans, and the reason is obvious. Few of his pictures have been seen on this side the water, and up to the present time, no American artist of genius has ever been appreciated.

West was elected President of the Royal Academy on the death of Reynolds. The king offered him the honor of knighthood. "Every American," says Dunlap, "will rejoice that he rejected the nick-name. 'West' is all-sufficient for his fame; any addition would be deformity." It had been the custom to confer this honor on the most distinguished painter in England. West was the only man who declined the title! Englishmen still call this American "*Sir Benjamin West*." Well, as long as they don't know how much such a nick-name belittles a man like West, we must overlook it.

But West fell on evil times. All he had to rely on was the friendship of the king. When the good old sovereign lost his senses, West was ordered to stop his great works. He went over to France:

The Louvre, where Napoleon had gathered the chefs-d'œuvre of the world, was then in its glory! An opportunity which never occurred before, and probably never will again, for lovers of art. The best artists, the most exquisite connoisseurs of Europe, were there. The Peace of Amiens had silenced for a time the roar of hostile cannon over Europe, and the world had flocked to Paris. West was received with enthusiasm and regard, and invited to an audience with the First Consul. He had the simple independence to recommend Napoleon to follow the example of Washington. How much that great man would have saved the world and himself, had he regarded this counsel!

But I must not take up any more of my space in talking about this noble pioneer in art. He was regarded throughout Europe during his life as the best painter of his times, and certainly all that England can boast of in historical painting, she owes mediately or immediately to his pencil, his instructions, or his influence. The best painting of West in this country is his "Healing the Sick." He gave it to the Pennsylvania Hospital, with a request that it might be used by students and artists. The managers refused to comply with his request!

Benjamin West died in London, 11th of March, 1820, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, where he still sleeps.

JOHN SINGLETON COPLEY, whose fame in Great Britain, as a painter, afterward laid the foundation of

the honors of his family, and brought Lord Lyndhurst to the peerage, was born in Boston, Mass., in 1738. At a very early age, before he had received any instruction, he painted under the mere impulse of genius, as good pictures, says Dunlap, as he ever executed in after life. He established his fame in Great Britain by his "Death of Lord Chatham."

Before this he had spent some time in Italy. It was his lot to travel with a companion who belonged to a class still extant in England; a "captious, cross-grained, self-conceited person," who amused himself in a small way, by writing down in his journal all the bad impressions he could receive or create during the day, as so many of his grumbling countrymen have since done. The following is one of his entries—he is speaking of Copley: "My companion is solacing himself that if they go on in America for a hundred years to come as they have for a hundred and fifty years past, they shall have an independent government; the woods will be cleared, art will then be encouraged there, and great artists will arise." Copley snuffed the gale of the Revolution from afar. In less than two years, the Colonies proclaimed themselves free and independent. Less than a hundred years have gone by, and the prophecy about art is fulfilled.

Bartolozzi engraved the "Death of Chatham," and Copley gave him two thousand guineas for the work. The painter sent copies to WASHINGTON and Adams. The former said, in reply, "This work,

highly valuable in itself, is rendered more estimable in my eye, when I remember that America gave birth to the celebrated artist who produced it." Such was the home feeling and the pride General Washington felt for everything which honored his own country.

Copley was a better painter of portraits than West, and probably his "Boy and the Squirrel" is a sweeter and more life-like thing than West could have done. In his historical pieces, he was his inferior. But he won for himself an honorable fame, and gave no little impulse to art in England. His "Death of Major Pierson," engraved by Heath, and his "Gibraltar," painted for Guildhall, London, are bold and impressive compositions. Copley died in London in 1815, leaving one child, who was born in Boston three years before the Revolution, and afterwards became High Chancellor of England.

CHARLES WILSON PEALE was born at Chester, in Maryland, April 16, 1741, when West and Copley were each three years old. He was apprenticed to a saddler in Annapolis, and worked at his trade till he was twenty-one; when he took a wife and set up for himself, sometimes making saddles, then coaches, watches, clocks, &c. A curious incident decided him to become a painter. He went to Norfolk to buy leather. Here he saw some paintings; he was struck with the art, and determined to throw aside the awl, and take up the pencil. He went home and painted his own portrait, which got him

employment. He made a visit to Philadelphia, where he procured implements for his art, and a book on painting. Soon after, he sailed round to Boston in a schooner, passage free, where he saw Copley, who generously aided him. On his return to Annapolis, he determined on going to London. A few generous men subscribed a sum of money, and he sailed for England in 1770. West received him with great kindness; and when his money was gone, gave him a home in his own house for several years. Peale occasionally modelled in wax, while in London, made spirited miniatures, and engraved in mezzotinto. He returned to America just before the Revolution; and when he heard the first gun of Independence, he flung aside his tools and inventions, and became Captain of a company of volunteers, who did some service at Trenton and Germantown. He turned Statesman, too, and represented Philadelphia in the Legislature, in 1779. But the Soldier found time to paint; he was executing a miniature of General Washington, who was sitting on a bed in the artist's studio, when the messenger came in with the news of the surrender of Burgoyne. Peale founded a Museum, and lectured on Natural History after the Revolution, till he lost his front teeth; then he turned dentist, and made ivory teeth, and at last porcelain for his own mouth and others. He tried to found an Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia; but it was too hard work at that time. He next attempted to get up a school for promoting

moting the Art of Design—opened it in the Hall of the Declaration of Independence; this also failed. But he was not a man to be discouraged by failure. In 1809, he did found “the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts,” and saw the Seventeenth Annual Exhibition of it. No American ever made so many generous, noble efforts for the promotion of the Arts; there have been few whose labors were in the end, crowned with better success. He was not a genius, but he was an intelligent worker. His name will be better known as the arts are better cultivated. He died in 1827, aged eighty-five years.

GILBERT CHARLES STUART was born in 1754. Here was a man whose like we shall not see again. He filled a link in our chain, that, but for him, would have been broken. Stuart used to take snuff immoderately; and he excused himself by saying he could not help it, for he was born in a snuff-mill—which was true in part. His father was a Scotchman who went to Narraganset, where the Pequots once lived, to set up a snuff-factory. Another Scotchman, it appears, happened to find Stuart when a boy, painting in a rude way, and he enticed him off to Scotland, where the Scot died, leaving the painter in the hands of somebody who treated him pretty roughly. He was put on board a collier, bound for Nova Scotia, and worked his passage home. He again went to painting; and Dr. Waterhouse says that “he was fully aware of the great importance of the art of drawing with anatomical exactness, and

took vast pains to attain it." The two, who studied together, prevailed on a "strong-muscle blacksmith" to sit for them in their Studio as a model; they gave the Cyclop half a dollar an evening. Stuart loved music and his ease so well, he could paint only by fits and starts.

He was a fine musician, and his love for his sister would have honored a young poet wooing the hand of a Hourii.

Ten days before the battle of Bunker Hill, he escaped from Boston in a vessel for England, where he was determined to go and be a painter, full of poverty, of enthusiasm, and hope—a painter's capital! Poor fellow! He found himself wandering around the solitude of London, one day, without a penny. He went by a church door in Foster Lane, where he heard an organ playing. He went up to the door; the pew-woman told him, in answer to a question what was going on, that the vestry were together, trying the candidates for the post of organist. He went in boldly—asked if he might try too. He was told he could—he did. He succeeded, got the place, and a salary of £30 a year! So much for his musical genius he had cultivated in America, when wise people were telling him he had better leave off serenading girls at night, and go to work. It gave him bread now, in the wilderness of London, when he needed nothing else.

Dr. Waterhouse, a true man, was in London. So he found lodgings for Stuart, near the house of some

Quaker relatives, and the Doctor managed, he says, to keep Stuart "even with his landlord and washerwoman, which was doing better than he had done." Stuart was not very thoughtful or provident. His friend had to hunt for him occasionally in the sponging house! All this time, for some unknown reason, he never once sought the acquaintance of West, but the moment Sully called on the latter (1778), and told him of Stuart's circumstances, he provided him money, and sent a messenger for him, and set him to work, and gave him a home in his house.

There are a hundred fine stories told of this eccentric, witty, improvident, but noble Stuart. He was full of genius, but he would not work, or he would have made himself a great master. One day the blunt Dr. Johnson came into West's Studio, and addressed something to Stuart. "Why, you speak very good English, sir;" said the Doctor. "Where did you learn it?" "Sir, I can better tell you where I did not learn it. It was not from your dictionary." Dr. Johnson had too much sense to be offended.

Stuart read men's characters as easily as he read newspapers. Lord Mulgrave employed him to paint his brother, Gen. Phipps, who was going to India. When the picture was done, and the General had sailed, Mulgrave came for the price. "This picture looks strange, sir. How is this? I see insanity in that face." "I painted your brother as I saw him." The first account Lord Mulgrave had from his brother

was, that his insanity (unknown and unapprehended by any of his friends) had driven him into suicide!

Stuart succeeded immediately after setting up for himself. No artists were paid higher for portraits, except Reynolds and Gainsborough; and he might easily have amassed a fortune. But his indulgences and his improvidence wearied out his friends, and good fortune itself. He was continually involved, and report says that he sometimes had to paint himself out of the debtors' prison. At last he returned to America, and ran a brilliant career.

In 1794, he was gratified in the accomplishment of the purpose and the wish of years. Washington was then President, and he sat for his portrait. Stuart was not pleased with his first attempt—he destroyed it, and Washington sat for him again. He tried once more, and made the best portrait ever painted of our hero and father. “He offered it to the State of Massachusetts,” says Dunlap, “for one thousand dollars, which they refused to give. Those entrusted with our national government passed by the opportunity of doing honor to themselves during the life of a man they could not honor; and the only portrait of Washington was left neglected in the painter's workshop, until the Boston Atheneum purchased it of his widow. It now (together with its companion, the portrait of Mrs. Washington) adorns one of the rooms of that institution.”

The head of this celebrated portrait was the only portion finished: but this rather increased its value.

All Stuart's Washingtons were copied from it. His full-length may be considered the best representative of that great man we have. We have been fortunate in the painter and the engraver too ; for Durand's print is worthy both of the hero and the artist. Stuart's life is like one of Salvator Rosa's less terrible pieces—filled with the light and the dark.

I can tell you only a word more about him now. The last head he painted was John Quincy Adams. He began it as a full-length ; but he was now old, and the hand of death was laid on him before he completed his work. The head he finished. He was 74 years old, but he never painted as well in the full vigor of life. He died in July, 1828, in his 75th year, and was buried in a church in Boston.

Stuart was gifted with exquisite genius as an artist, and rare brilliancy as a man. Some of his works show indications of powers which with earnest application and study would have enrolled his name among the greatest artists of the world. But we must forget the weaknesses of the man in our pride over the artist. The time will come when Stuart's name will be engraven in everlasting brass. His country will not suffer it to die. All his pictures will be carefully sought for, and each one will have its history.

I wished to tell you of Washington Allston, who has painted some pieces unequalled in Europe during this century ; of Vanderlyn, who is now engaged in Paris on his last great work, for our Government ;

and of many other living painters, sculptors, and engravers, who are winning golden honors at home and abroad. A new race of artists has risen, and the day of art is coming. It will not be a single generation, dear Albèri, before the arts will stand higher in this country than they now stand in any other nation. The men are now at their easels, who will see the day when their fellow-citizens will crowd to their Studios with eagerness and enthusiasm—when Congress will hold high the laurel crown for the men who will make the history of our fathers live in marble, and breathe in canvass. And then the Painter and the Sculptor will rank with the Poet and the Historian. The same spirit that lived in Greece in the times of Apelles, and in Florence under her Medici, will fire the souls of our people. Over our broad battle-fields will rise high in heaven, to meet the sun in his coming, monuments, and temples, and tombs, to the glorious men who stood firm in the dark days of our history. The marble and the bronze are waiting quietly in the bosom of our soil, for that day to come; and the artists are born who will pile them over the dust of brave men who are sleeping on the soil they made free.

I have not time to say a word about your dear Florence, your bleeding Italy. But let us hope on, and hope always, for who can tell if she will not ere long lift up her form proudly once more among the nations?

In a few days I turn my face once more to our sunny home over the sea. Again we shall meet in Florence, and make our little pilgrimages to the holy places of art and genius. Think of us while we are rocking on the ocean, and remember us and our little ones before the shrine of Santa Croce, where you go to pray.

Ever your true ———,
C. E. L.

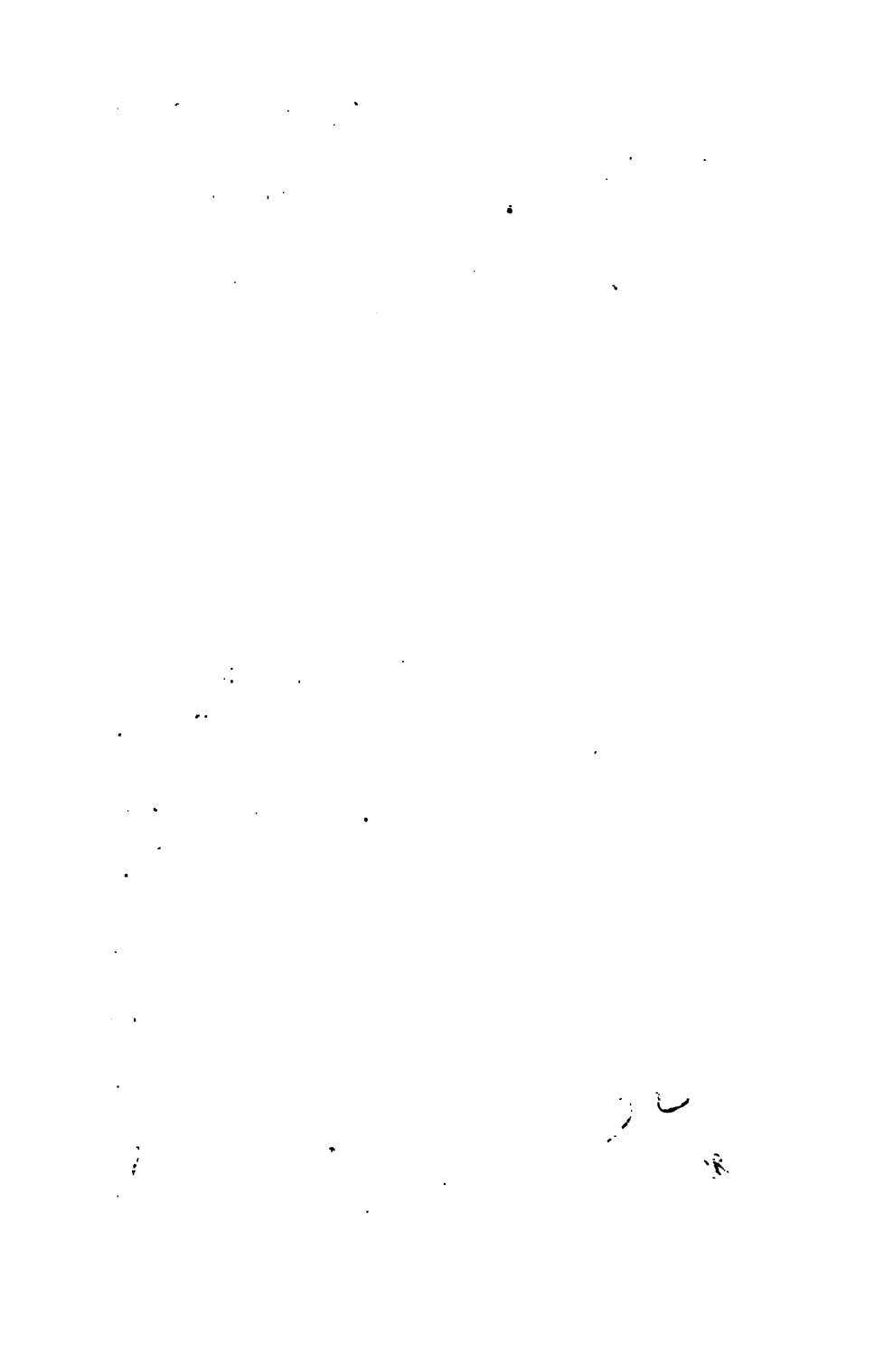
DEAR READER:

WHEN I began this Second Volume, I designed to make you read twenty-four Letters, instead of twelve; for I have not half done. But as old Isaac Barrow said of the short days of winter, it don't give one an opportunity to preach more than half a sermon. I had taken pains to gather a great number of interesting and valuable facts, relating to the history of the lives and works of our living artists, at home and abroad, which would probably have been read with pleasure and pride by their countrymen. But perhaps I have said too much already; and if I have not there will be time to speak hereafter.

C. E. L.

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